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The Conflict Tactics Scale: Assessing the meaning, context, and consequences of partner violence.

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The Conflict Tactics Scale:

Assessing the Meaning, Context, and Consequences of Partner Violence

by

Renee A. Cormier

B.A., University of Manitoba, 1993

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Sociology of 0340
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Teacher Training 0530
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Language
- General 0679
- Ancient 0289
- Linguistics 0290
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Literature
- General 0401
- Classical 0294
- Comparative 0295
- Medieval 0297
- Modern 0298
- African 0316
- American 0591
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- Canadian (English) 0352
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- Germanic 0311
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PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND THEOLOGY
Philosophy 0422
Religion
- General 0318
- Biblical Studies 0321
- Clergy 0319
- History of 0320
- Philosophy of 0322

Theology 0469

SOCIAL SCIENCES
American Studies 0323
Anthropology
- Archaeology 0324
- Cultural 0326
- Physical 0327

Business Administration
- General 0310
- Accounting 0272
- Banking 0770
- Management 0454
- Marketing 0338

Canadian Studies 0385
Economics
- General 0501
- Agricultural 0503
- Commerce-Business 0505
- Finance 0508
- History 0509
- Labor 0510
- Theory 0511

Folklore 0358
Geography 0366
Gerontology 0351
History
- General 0578
- Ancient 0579
- Medieval 0581
- Modern 0582
- Black 0328
- African 0331
- Asia, Australia and Oceania 0332
- Canadian 0334
- European 0335
- Latin American 0336
- Middle Eastern 0333
- United States 0337

History of Science 0585
Law 0398
Political Science
- General 0615
- International Law and Relations 0616
- Public Administration 0617

Recreation 0814
Social Work 0452
Sociology
- General 0626
- Criminology and Penology 0627
- Demography 0938
- Ethnic and Racial Studies 0631
- Individual and Family Studies 0628
- Industrial and Labor Relations 0629
- Public and Social Welfare 0630
- Social Structure and Development 0700
- Theory and Methods 0344

Transportation 0709
Urban and Regional Planning 0999
Women's Studies 0453

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Agriculture
- General 0473
- Agronomy 0285
- Animal Culture and Nutrition 0475
- Animal Pathology 0476
- Food Science and Technology 0359
- Forestry and Wildlife 0478
- Plant Culture 0479
- Plant Pathology 0480
- Plant Physiology 0817
- Range Management 0777
- Wood Technology 0746

Biology
- General 0306
- Anatomy 0287
- Biostatistics 0308
- Botany 0309
- Cell 0379
- Ecology 0329
- Entomology 0353
- Genetics 0369
- Limnology 0793
- Microbiology 0410
- Molecular 0307
- Neuroscience 0317
- Oceanography 0416
- Physiology 0433
- Radiation 0821
- Veterinary Science 0778
- Zoology 0472

Biophysics
- General 0786
- Medical 0760

EARTH SCIENCES
Biogeochemistry 0425
Geochemistry 0996
Geodesy 0370
Geology 0372
Geophysics 0373
Hydrology 0388
Mineralogy 0411
Paleobotany 0345
Paleoecology 0426
Paleontology 0418
Paleozoology 0985
Palynology 0427
Physical Geography 0368
Physical Oceanography 0415

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
Environmental Sciences 0768
Health Sciences
- General 0566
- Audiology 0300
- Chemotherapy 0992
- Dentistry 0567
- Education 0350
- Hospital Management 0769
- Human Development 0758
- Immunology 0982
- Medicine and Surgery 0564
- Mental Health 0347
- Nursing 0569
- Nutrition 0570
- Obstetrics and Gynecology 0380
- Occupational Health and Therapy 0354
- Ophthalmology 0381
- Pathology 0571
- Pharmacology 0419
- Pharmacy 0572
- Physical Therapy 0382
- Public Health 0573
- Radiology 0574
- Recreation 0575
- Speech Pathology 0460
- Toxicology 0383

Home Economics 0386

PHYSICAL SCIENCES
Pure Sciences
Chemistry
- General 0485
- Agricultural 0749
- Analytical 0486
- Biochemistry 0487
- Inorganic 0488
- Nuclear 0738
- Organic 0490
- Pharmaceutical 0491
- Physical 0494
- Polymer 0495
- Radiation 0754

Mathematics 0405
Physics
- General 0605
- Acoustics 0986
- Astronomy and Astrophysics 0606
- Atmospheric Science 0608
- Atomic 0748
- Electronics and Electricity 0607
- Elementary Particles and High Energy 0798
- Fluid and Plasma 0759
- Molecular 0609
- Nuclear 0610
- Optics 0752
- Radiation 0756
- Solid State 0611

Statistics 0463

Applied Sciences
Applied Mechanics 0346
Computer Science 0984
Engineering
- General 0537
- Aerospace 0538
- Agricultural 0539
- Automotive 0540
- Biomedical 0541
- Chemical 0542
- Civil 0543
- Electronics and Electrical 0544
- Heat and Thermodynamics 0348
- Hydraulic 0545
- Industrial 0546
- Marine 0547
- Materials Science 0794
- Mechanical 0548
- Metallurgy 0743
- Mining 0551
- Nuclear 0552
- Packaging 0549
- Petroleum 0765
- Sanitary and Municipal 0554
- System Science 0790

Geotechnology 0428
Operations Research 0796
Plastics Technology 0795
Textile Technology 0994

PSYCHOLOGY
General 0621
Behavioral 0384
Clinical 0622
Developmental 0620
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to test if the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) is a valid measure of the incidence/prevalence of partner violence and whether it overestimates the comparability of male and female victimization. Through the use of a computer program, the CTS was administered to 190 University of Windsor students (123 females and 67 males) in its original form with some elaborations. When participants indicated that they experienced one of the acts from the CTS, either as a victim or a perpetrator, they were asked to provide information concerning the meaning, context, and consequences of the particular act. Similar to other studies using the CTS, 36% of females and 52% of males reported being victimized by either a current or past partner. Significantly more females (55%) than males (34%) reported perpetrating an act from the CTS. Responses on the CTS would therefore suggest that females are more violent than males and that males suffer more abuse, but the supplementary information concerning the meaning, context, and consequences of violence provided by participants suggests that these conclusions are not warranted. Male and female experiences as victims of violence differ dramatically. A considerable proportion of female victims of violence described patterns of abuse in which their partner started the confrontation, was the sole aggressor, was responsible for the altercation, and who acted out of frustration, anger, or desire to intimidate. Women reported suffering severe emotional trauma and in some cases, physical harm. Male victims of abuse provided information about their experiences which were full of contradictions. For example, while many men reporting victimization said that their partners started the violence, many of the same men indicated that their partners' motive

was retaliation or self-defense, suggesting a very different picture of abuse. Moreover, men reported little emotional and physical harm as a result of their victimization. It is clear from these results, that although the CTS equates male and female victimization, this is not warranted. Male and female victims of violence differ considerably in terms of their interpretation of the violent episode, the context in which the violence occurs, and the consequences of the violence they suffer at the hands of their partners.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

In the early 1970's, wife-beating was beginning to be recognized as a significant social problem. Murray Straus (1974, 1979), a family violence researcher, developed the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) to determine how prevalent the problem of wife abuse and other forms of family violence had become. The CTS consists of a list of acts a person may engage in when in a conflict with their partner or their child. Respondents were asked to indicate which tactics they had used in the last year. The acts include reasoning, verbal aggression, and physical violence. Straus and his colleagues (Gelles & Straus, 1988; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980) administered the scales to a national, random sample of males and females who were either married or cohabiting with a partner[1] in the United States in 1975 and again in 1986. In both studies, female participants indicated they had engaged in as many violent acts against their partners as male participants reported. Other researchers who administered the CTS to respondents who were either married or cohabiting with their partners have reported similar results (Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1988; Browning & Dutton, 1986; Brutz & Ingoldsby, 1984; Kennedy & Dutton, 1989; Meredith, Abbott, & Adams, 1986; Sommer, Barnes, & Murray, 1989; Steinmetz, 1981; Szinovacz, 1983). The same results have been obtained in studies which have used the CTS with dating couples instead of married couples (Arias & Johnson, 1989; Arias, Samios, & O'Leary, 1987; Cate, Henton, Koval, Christopher, & Lloyd, 1982; DeMaris, 1987; Lane & Gwartney-Gibbs, 1985; Laner & Thompson, 1982; Marshall & Rose, 1990; O'Leary, Barling, Arias, Malone, & Tyree, 1987; Sigelman, Berry, & Wiles, 1984). As a

consequence of these findings, claims of a "battered husband syndrome" were made (Steinmetz, 1977/78) to parallel the "battered woman syndrome" proposed by Walker (1984).

There was a prompt and powerful response to this claim of a battered husband syndrome. Many have argued that the notion of sexual symmetry in violence between partners is preposterous and that females are overwhelmingly the victims of abuse (e.g., Berk, Berk, Loseke, & Rauma, 1983; DeKeseredy, 1991; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Kurz, 1989; Pleck, Pleck, Grossman, & Bart, 1977/78). In contrast to the findings obtained using the CTS, archival research such as analyses of police records, court records, hospital records, and criminal victimization surveys (e.g., Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Gaquin, 1977/78; Levinger, 1966; Stark, Flitcraft, & Frazier, 1979) have demonstrated that females are victimized much more frequently by their partners than are males.

In trying to account for the differences in results obtained by means of survey versus archival research, the validity of the Conflict Tactics Scale has been questioned. Some critics note that the Conflict Tactics Scale ignores the actors' interpretation, motivations, and intentions concerning the violent episode, or their subjective interpretation of the events (see Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly,1992 for a review of criticisms). Other criticisms include the observation that the scale fails to take into account the context and consequences of the behaviour, and that it neither assesses the events preceding the act of violence nor the sequence of events by which it progresses. Saunders (1986) has also argued that the CTS fails to take into account the fact that women, for the most part, hit in self-defense.

The Conflict Tactics Scale was originally developed to measure the incidence and

prevalence of family violence, however it is now being used extensively to identify victims and perpetrators of violence in order to find correlates of abuse and to further understand the dynamics of spousal abuse. Given the contradictory data on aggression and victimization and the criticisms concerning validity that have been levelled against the CTS, it is surprising that it remains the most widely-used instrument in the study of family violence.

The purpose of this study was to assess the validity of the Conflict Tactics Scale. In the present study, participants who completed the CTS were further asked to assess the meaning, context, and consequences of any violence that they have experienced, either as victims or perpetrators. The results were expected to show that, with the collection of additional information concerning the use of violence, male victimization cannot be compared to female victimization. This would provide evidence that the CTS is invalid for the purposes for which it was originally designed (i.e., to determine the prevalence/incidence of wife abuse and husband abuse).

The Conflict Tactics Scale has a place in the history of research on family violence.

Research in Area of Family Violence

Although all researchers in the field of family violence would agree that their goal is to eliminate all forms of family violence, many different perspectives guide theorizing and research about how this should be accomplished. Gelles and Loseke (1993) suggest that family violence theories can be divided into three main perspectives: the

psychological perspective, the sociological perspective, and the feminist perspective. The psychological perspective is more focussed on describing the characteristics of violent individuals. The psychological characteristics of violent individuals are not a focus of the current study, therefore this perspective will not be presented here. The real debate in the field is between the proponents of the sociological perspective who have used the Conflict Tactics Scale to demonstrate that females are as violent as males, and proponents of the feminist perspective who argue that females are overwhelmingly the victims of violence by their male partners.

The line between the two perspectives is not always clear because some feminist theorists are also sociologists, and some sociologists consider themselves to be feminists. Advocates of each perspective agree on many points but, in general, they disagree on who is/are the real victim(s) of partner violence. The argument for sexual asymmetry in the use of violence generally comes from feminist scholars, whereas the claim of symmetry in the use of violence is argued by sociologists. Although this overlap in theorizing exists, the perspectives will be labelled "feminist" and "sociological" for the purposes of this paper and to maintain consistency with existing literature.

The Feminist Perspective

Feminists (e.g., Dobash & Dobash, 1977/78; Kurz, 1993; Yllo, 1993) argue that family violence is a misleading term because it masks who is doing what to whom. Although they do not deny that some women have been violent toward their male partners, they claim that the societal problem is largely one of wife abuse. They claim that the battered husband syndrome, as proposed by Steinmetz (1977/78) is a myth and

that the focus of study should be not only partner violence but all forms of violence against women including rape, marital rape, sexual harassment, and incest (Wardell, Gillespie, & Leffler, 1983). Wife abuse is viewed as a product of the patriarchal society where men assert their power over their female intimates by using domination and control (Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992).

Feminist theory explains sexual asymmetry in spouse abuse by claiming that the institution of marriage promotes men's domination over their wives through the structure of societal norms (Kurz, 1993). Women are mainly responsible for child care, domestic work, and general emotional support of their husbands; whereas, a man's identity revolves around his employment and his role as provider for his family. Since the husband has the more socially valued role within the marriage he has more control over his partner and thus can more readily use violence as a means of control. This, coupled with the fact that wives are also more economically dependent on their husbands, makes women the more "appropriate victims" of abuse (Dobash & Dobash, 1977/78).

Feminist Research

Analyses of police reports, hospital records, courts, and women's shelters have demonstrated that women are overwhelmingly the victims of spousal assault (e.g., Chester & Streather, 1972; Dobash & Dobash, 1977/78; Levinger, 1966; O'Brien, 1971; Stark, Flitcraft & Frazier, 1979).

Hospital Records and Police Records. Stark, Flitcraft, and Frazier (1979) analyzed hospital records and found that of 481 women who presented themselves for treatment to a hospital emergency room in a major urban centre, 14 (or 2.8%) were

identified as battered women and an additional 72 women (or 16%) had injuries which suggested they were battered. Berk, Berk, Loseke, and Rauma (1983) reported that of 262 domestic disturbance calls made to the police in Santa Barbara, California, women were the injury victims in 94% of the cases. These findings would suggest that, in most cases of partner violence, women are injured to a much greater degree than men.

Dobash and Dobash (1977/78) analyzed police records in Scotland and found that of 3,020 cases where police were called to intervene in a domestic dispute involving spouses, females were the victims in 98% of cases, males were victims in 1.4% of cases, and the remaining cases were unclear. Erez (1986) found similar results in her analysis of police records. Females were victims in 83% to 86% of domestic disturbance calls and males were victims in 14% to 17% of cases.

While these data are suggestive, such analyses are not necessarily proof of sexual asymmetry in violence. Critics of the feminist approach (e.g., Steinmetz, 1977/78; Straus 1990a) have suggested that these samples are biased because males may not be as likely as females to go to the hospital or the police as a result of the abuse they sustain. Males may also be too ashamed or embarrassed to admit that they are victimized by their wives.

National Crime Survey. The greatest support for sexual asymmetry in spousal violence is from criminal victimization surveys using random samples. The National Crime Survey is conducted annually on a sample of approximately 60,000 U. S. households. Gaquin (1977/78) analyzed the data from the U. S. National Crime Survey from 1973-1975. Males and females were asked if they had ever been victimized by their partner. She reported that in all violent crimes between spouses, husbands were 13 times more likely to assault their wives than vice versa. The assault rate for husbands

was 3.9 per 1000 and for wives was .3 per 1000.

These results of both male and female perpetration are much lower than estimates from other studies. One possible explanation is that the National Crime Survey is presented to the respondents as a study of crime; this could result in underreporting. (Straus 1990a). For example, a person may see slapping one's partner as wrong, but they may not necessarily see it as a "crime" and therefore not report it. In addition, the participants responded with their partner present, and victims may have been reluctant to say they had been victimized by their partner under these circumstances. In order to explain the difference in assault rates between males and females, it has been suggested that females are more likely to recognize that a crime has been committed when their husband strikes them, whereas men may not necessarily interpret their wife striking them as a crime. (Winnipeg researcher sparks..., 1994).

Random Sample Surveys of Women. Some studies have been conducted by feminists using random samples of women. Diana Russell (1982) interviewed a random sample of 644 ever-married women from San Francisco and asked them 'Was your husband (or ex-husband) ever physically violent with you?' She found that 21% of the women she interviewed answered "yes" to this question. In this case, it is the women themselves who defined 'violence'. Russell asked the women in the sample to describe what happened. She found that minor acts of violence such as being pushed or held down were not seen as 'violence' so the rates of violence may actually be higher for this sample. Although no data were collected from male respondents, these results clearly demonstrate that the estimates of abuse obtained by sociologists using the Conflict Tactics Scale, (for example, Gelles & Straus (1988) found that approximately 12% of

women in their sample had been victimized), minimally underestimate the number of female victims of abuse.

The most significant shortcoming of the feminist approach in the field of family violence is the lack of studies which have used a random sample of both males and females. Such a sample is necessary to demonstrate that, based on the percent of the population affected, female victimization is a more pressing social problem than male victimization.

The Sociological Perspective

Proponents of the sociological perspective (e.g., Gelles, 1993; Straus, 1993) believe that in order to study spousal violence, one must look at a variety of social structural factors. Factors such as socioeconomic status, race, age, sex, and ethnicity all influence social behaviour. Sociologists view the family as a unique social institution which is by nature at high risk for violence. Like feminists, sociologists also view violence as a result of the sexist society. In fact, much sociological theory has been affected by a feminist analysis. Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz (1980) argue that wife beating is more likely to occur in families where power is in the hands of the husband as opposed to where power is equally shared. Sociologists believe that it is particular characteristics such as male dominance in the family, millions of people living in poverty in a relatively wealthy society, and particular social structures which serve to make the family a violent institution.

Studies by sociologists (e.g., Gelles & Straus, 1988; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980) have been conducted to measure the incidence and prevalence of partner abuse.

The results of these studies demonstrate that there are far more women using violence than indicated by the studies of archival data. Based on these data, Straus (1993) has concluded that violence by women is a serious social problem despite the lower probability that a female could inflict serious harm on her male partner. The data collected by Straus and his colleagues were obtained through the use of the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS).

The Conflict Tactics Scale

The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) was developed by Murray Straus (1974, 1979) as a means to measure the prevalence of family violence. The scale was originally intended to measure conflict between any family members, but has been used in recent years to measure a person's responses to conflict with their partner. Respondents are asked to think back over the past year when they and their partner have disagreed about something or just had any type of conflict. They are then presented with a list of ways to resolve conflicts. The tactics are divided into three categories: Reasoning, Verbal Aggression, and Violence. The Reasoning subscale includes items such as "discussed the issue calmly". Such items measure the extent to which couples rationally discuss the issue. Verbal aggression may be any verbal or nonverbal act that symbolically hurts the other. Items included in this subscale are "insulted or swore at the other" and "sulked and/or refused to talk about it". The measure of Violence (or physical aggression) is further subdivided into minor violence (e.g., "pushed, grabbed, or shoved", "slapped") and severe violence (e.g., "beat up your partner" or "punched your partner"). Straus made the distinction between minor and severe violence to parallel the legal distinction between

"simple assault" and "aggravated assault" in United States law. An aggravated assault is an attack which is likely to result in grave bodily harm such as using a knife or gun, regardless of whether the victim was injured as a result or not.

The National Family Violence Surveys.

The National Family Violence Survey conducted in 1975 (Straus et al., 1980) and the National Family Violence Resurvey of 1985 (Gelles & Straus, 1988) were the first attempts to measure the incidence of all forms of family violence in a nationally representative sample of American families. These surveys also marked the first application of the Conflict Tactics Scale to a large, random sample (960 males and 1183 females in 1975 and 2480 males and 3522 females in 1985). Straus (1990) argues that the CTS provides an efficient method to gather information about violent acts between family members. Since the CTS was used in both surveys, it was possible to detect any increases or decreases in violent acts between partners.

Straus and his colleagues (1980) reported from the National Family Violence Survey of 1975 that 12.1% of husbands admitted to having engaged in at least one violent act in the preceding year; whereas, 11.6% of females admitted to having been violent. Furthermore, 3.8% of husbands and 4.6% of wives admitted to having engaged in severe violence (e.g., kicking, biting, punching, etc.) In the Resurvey, conducted in 1985, 11.3% of husbands indicated they engaged in a violent act, and 12.1% of wives indicated they used one of the violent tactics. In terms of severe violence, 3.0% of husbands and 4.4% of wives indicated they had engaged in severe violence. Gelles and Straus (1988) argue that, although not statistically significant, there appears to be a trend toward a decrease in the overall use of violence by husbands and an increase in the

overall use of violent acts by wives.

The Validity of the Conflict Tactics Scale

The claims of sexual symmetry made by sociologists have come under heavy attack and as a result, the Conflict Tactics Scale has been subjected to substantial criticism of its validity. Evaluating the validity of an instrument is a difficult task and the criteria for making judgments regarding validity are imprecise. Straus (1990) argues that studies assessing the level of agreement between spouses on the CTS (e.g., Browning & Dutton, 1986; Jouriles and O'Leary, 1985; Szinovacz, 1983) provide the scale with concurrent validity. One partner's responses on the CTS provides the validation criteria for the responses of their partner. If there are large discrepancies in responses on the scale, then the CTS cannot be valid.

When Szinovacz (1983) collected data from 103 couples, she found only 40% agreement on the use of violence by wives and 27% agreement on the husband's use of violence. Jouriles and O'Leary (1985) found 72% agreement in both the husband's and wife's use of violence in 65 couples beginning marital therapy. In 37 couples from a "community sample", there was 77% agreement for the husband's use of violence and 80% agreement for wife's use of violence. Although these figures appear to be high, they largely represent agreement on non-occurrences of violence. Browning and Dutton (1986) found high rates of underreporting in their sample of couples in the treatment sample. Both husbands and wives tended to underreport their own use of violence. The agreement between spouses was .65 for the husband's use of violence and .26 for the wife's use of violence. These studies were cited by Straus (1990) as evidence of concurrent validity, but in fact, the low concordance rates reported demonstrate that the

CTS has poor concurrent validity.

Straus (1990) argues that "the strongest evidence concerns the construct validity of the CTS. It has been used in a large number of studies producing findings that tend to be consistent with previous research (when available), consistent regardless of gender of respondent, and theoretically meaningful" (p. 71). The Conflict Tactics Scale has been successful in finding differences in responses as a function of age, race, socioeconomic status, and duration of relationship (e.g., Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1988; Pedersen & Thomas, 1992; Smith, 1990; Sommer, Barnes, & Murray, 1992). Straus (1990) cites these correlations as evidence of construct validity, but stresses that "although these are not replications of previous empirical findings, they are consistent with relevant theory", (p. 43). The evidence he cites for construct validity is based solely on studies which have used the Conflict Tactics Scale. This argument is circular and fails to support the validity of the CTS. Overall, there appears to be little evidence to demonstrate that the Conflict Tactics Scale is a valid measure.

Criticisms of the Conflict Tactics Scale

Dobash, Dobash, Wilson and Daly (1992) have provided a summary of various researchers' criticisms of the Conflict Tactics Scale. Among the criticisms are that the acts of physical violence are arbitrarily delimited and exclude acts such as sexual assault and rape; that the distinction between "minor" and "severe" violence is poorly defined; that the categories are not mutually exclusive (e.g., "kicked, bit, or hit with a fist"); that the respondents may not have accurate recall of the past year's events; that violence may occur in contexts other than conflict; that the scale ignores the perpetrators' motivations and intentions as well as the victims' subjective interpretations of the episode; that the

CTS ignores the context of the violence, the events preceding the violence as well as the sequence of events by which it progresses; that it is confined to questions about acts and ignores patterns of abuse and other factors involved in abuse, such as intimidation, isolation, stalking, and terrorizing; that the scale fails to examine the consequences of violence (especially injuries sustained as a result of violence) (e.g., Berk, Berk, et al., 1983; DeKeseredy, 1991; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Gartner, 1993; Kurz, 1993; Makepeace, 1986; Pagelow, 1985; Pleck, Pleck, Grossman, & Bart, 1977/78; Saunders, 1986; Walker, 1984; Yllo, 1993).

This study will address three criticisms of the CTS in particular: the perpetrator's and victim's subjective interpretation of the violence, the context in which the violence occurs, and the consequences of the violence.

Subjective Interpretation of Violence

One of the criticisms levelled against the Conflict Tactics Scale is that it fails to take into account the meaning of violence to both the perpetrator and the victim. Some studies (e.g., Jouriles & O'Leary, 1985; Szinovacz, 1983) have demonstrated that there are considerable discrepancies in reports of violence using the CTS when couples have been used. Szinovacz (1983) administered the CTS to 103 couples and found that agreement on violent episodes was little greater than chance, and on some items, lower than chance. On specific items, husbands tended to underreport their own use of violence; that is, wives reported being victimized to a greater degree than admitted by husbands. In addition, the opposite was true for the wife's use of violence. Wives were

more likely to admit to their own use of violence than was indicated by husbands. In other words, wives more readily acknowledge both their victimization and their own use of violence. The fact that each spouse may perceive the violent episode differently may explain the overreporting by wives. The wife may be more likely than the husband to recall a minor act of violence. For example if she punched him in the arm and intended to hurt him, but failed to do so, the husband may not take this behaviour seriously and may laugh it off, whereas the event may be more memorable for the wife (Szinovacz, 1983).

Male and female victims and perpetrators may also differ in the extent to which they seek to justify the violent episode. Dobash and Dobash (1979) conducted interviews with male batterers and found that males believe they are justified in hitting their wives and that this behaviour is socially acceptable. Cantos, Neidig, and O'Leary (1993) conducted interviews with couples referred to a treatment program for domestic violence through the military police following responses to domestic disturbance calls. In 84% of the couples, both the husband and wife admitted to having been violent. Wives reported that the husband was the only violent partner in 10% of the couples. According to both husbands' and wives' reports, the wife was the only violent partner in 4% of couples. The authors report that both wives and husbands were more likely to blame their spouse than themselves for the violence. As the severity of the violence increased, wives were more likely to attribute blame to their partner and husbands also began to accept more responsibility for the violence. This agreement on attributing blame to the husband may be indicative that the high percentage of couples who reported that both partners were violent actually involves a male who is violent and a female who either retaliates or uses

violence in self-defense.

Differences in intentions when engaging in violence also exist. For example, a couple may engage in mock physical aggression such as throwing pillows or wrestling where there is no intent to injure. It is not clear if these acts are reported by respondents. Margolin (1987) demonstrated that it is necessary to obtain additional information about specific items the respondent endorses. In one case, when asked further about a "kicking" incident, a couple indicated that kicking did take place but it took place in bed in a kidding manner where there was no intent to injure. Neither partner interpreted this behaviour as violent.

Makepeace (1986) asked college students their reasons for engaging in violence. A small percentage of respondents (2.4% of males and 8.3% of females) reported they intended to injure their partner. The motives most often cited by females were self-defense (35.6%) and uncontrollable anger (24.2%). Males indicated they used violence to intimidate their partner (21.3%) and simply because of uncontrollable anger (28.3%). These results provide support for the feminist perspective where males use violence against their female partner to intimidate them and consequently assert their power over them. The high percentage of females who cited self-defense and uncontrollable anger as their primary motives for engaging in a violent act suggests that the context in which violence occurs needs to be examined.

The Context of Abuse

The Conflict Tactics Scale has been criticized for stripping violent acts of any context. The CTS ignores events leading to and surrounding a violent act. Kurz (1993)

argues that this reduction of violence to a single act serves to shift the focus away from patterns of abuse and does not address issues such as intimidation and domination. Interviews with batterers and victims (Gelles & Straus, 1988) reveal that core issues in the use of violence are power and control. This does not explain the high percentage of women who indicate they engage in as many violent acts as men. Saunders (1986) collected data from 52 battered women on their motives for using violence. The majority of women indicated that when they committed a violent act, it was in self-defense. This result is similar to Makepeace (1986) that most females indicated that they used violence in self-defense.

Gelles and Straus (1988) gathered information about initiation of violence. They found that in 53% of violent couples, wives reported that they had struck the first blow, whereas husbands reported they struck their partner first in 42% of the cases. These findings need to be interpreted with caution (Straus, 1993). Although they were asked, 'Who started the physical conflict, you or your partner/spouse?", it is possible that respondents reported who started the argument rather than who hit first. The wife could also have hit first in self-defense in order to avoid impending harm from her partner or simply out of terror (Browne, 1987).

Overall, there appears to be little information on the context surrounding a violent act. It is difficult to reach any conclusions concerning the initiation or progression of violence between couples.

The Consequences of Abuse

Perhaps the most crucial criticism made against the Conflict Tactics Scale is that

it fails to look at the consequences of the violent acts. The fact that males are in general larger and stronger than females, and therefore are likely to inflict more damage is often overlooked. A punch from a male will have more serious consequences in most cases than a punch from a female.

Stets and Straus (1990) attempted to correct for this shortcoming by including questions about outcomes in the National Family Violence Resurvey conducted in 1985. They asked respondents who indicated they had been victims of violence whether they consulted a doctor for their injuries, how much time they took off work, and how many days they spent in bed due to illness. Also included were questions measuring depression, stress, and psychosomatic symptoms. On average, more female victims than male victims made visits to a doctor, spent time in bed due to illness, and took time off from work. Although females did not differ from males in terms of psychosomatic symptoms, females who were victims of severe violence were more depressed and stressed than male victims of severe abuse. Cantos et al. (1993) and Makepeace (1986) have also found that females who have been victims of abuse indicate they suffer more serious injuries which require medical attention.

A study on spousal homicide rates in Canada (Statistics Canada, 1994) reports that 3.2 women have been killed by their husband for each husband killed by his wife. Thirty-eight percent (1,435 out of 3,811) of all adult females killed between the years 1974 and 1992 were killed by their husbands. This translates into a nine times greater probability that a married woman will be killed by her husband than by a stranger. Only 6% (451 out of 7,517) of adult male homicide victims (451) were killed by their wives. It also appears that in half the cases where the husband was the victim, he was also the initial

aggressor and that the wife's behaviour was in self-defense (Statistics Canada, 1994).

It can be concluded from the results of such studies that females suffer more physical injuries as a consequence of partner violence, contrary to what the results using the Conflict Tactic Scale imply. The psychological consequences of partner violence are not as clear. Walker's (1979) female respondents indicated that the psychological aspect is the worst part of their experience of abuse. Stets and Straus (1990) reported that in their U.S. national sample, there was no difference in levels of stress and depression between men and women who experienced minor violence as measured by the CTS. However, women indicated that they suffered higher levels of stress and depression than men when they were victims of severe violence. It may be the case that women who indicate on the CTS that they are victims of severe violence, may actually be victims of severe cycles of abuse, whereas men may experience one act which caused little emotional damage.

Summary

A review of the relevant literature revealed that there exists a controversy concerning the incidence, prevalence and implication of partner violence. Proponents of the feminist perspective believe that females are the overwhelming majority of the victims of partner abuse, whereas advocates of the sociological perspective argue that there are as many victims of husband abuse as wife abuse. The discrepancy centres around the use of the Conflict Tactics Scale, a measure frequently used by sociologists to support their claim of sexual symmetry in the use of violence. Feminists argue that the scale is invalid in that it strips violent behaviours of meaning, context, and consequences

and thus inflates the estimate of violent females. More research investigating these factors is necessary in order to determine if the problem of male victimization is comparable to that of female victimization.

The Present Study

In comparison to studies conducted with female victims of violence, little research has been conducted with male victims. Victims of wife abuse are often recruited for studies through shelters or through counselling programs for male batterers and battered women. There are, in comparison, few services available for male victims of violence through which recruiting could be achieved. Consequently, it is difficult to find any literature concerned with the experiences of abused males. The results demonstrating sexual symmetry in the use of violence obtained through the use of the Conflict Tactics Scale would indicate that such males do exist. Although the physical consequences of violence appear more severe for females than males, it is difficult to assess sex differences in the psychological consequences of violence. The context surrounding violence may also provide information regarding how males and females differ in their use of violence. It may also be the case that the sexes perceive and interpret a violent episode in different ways. This study is designed to provide information regarding all of these factors. Specifically, it is hypothesized that when information is obtained regarding context, subjective interpretation, and consequences of violence, it will be found that the Conflict Tactics Scale overestimates the comparability of male and female victimization.

Defining Violence.

Partner violence is a difficult concept to define. Straus and his associates (Straus et al. 1980) defined violence as 'an act carried out with the intention, or perceived intention, of causing physical pain or injury to another person'. This definition must be expanded to include threats of violence as well as any psychological consequences of a violent act. For the purposes of this study, violence will be defined as any act which is intended, or perceived to be intended to cause physical or psychological injury or which threatens or is perceived to threaten injury to another person.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

One hundred and ninety participants (123 females and 67 males) were recruited from various Psychology classes and from students who saw signs posted at the University of Windsor. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 50 years. Females had a median age of 22 (M=25.41, SD=7.12) and males had a median age of 23 (M=25.72, SD=5.98). The majority of participants identified themselves as white (72.6%). Refer to Table 1 for details concerning racial diversity. For participating in the study, each respondent's name was entered in a draw for one of two cash prizes.

Measures

Demographic Information. Participants were asked their age, sex, if they currently are or have been involved in a heterosexual relationship, the duration of their current relationship, their marital status, and their race (see Appendix A). Participants who indicated that they experienced violence in a past relationship were asked how long ago the particular relationship took place.

The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS). The Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, 1979) was administered to each participant. Respondents indicated how often within either the last year, in the duration of their current relationship, or in the past they had committed each of the 18 items listed in Appendix B. They were also asked if they had been victims of any of the acts. The last nine items represent violent tactics. The items are further subdivided into "minor" violence (items k, l, and m) and "severe" violence (items n-r). These items differ in terms of the potential severity of the consequences of the acts.

Table 1

Racial Composition of Sample.

Race	Females (n=121)		Males (n=62)		Total (n=183)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
White	89	73.6	49	79.0	138	75.4
Black	4	3.3	0	0.0	4	2.2
Hispanic	1	0.8	2	3.2	3	1.6
Asian	23	19.0	10	16.1	33	18.0
Other	4	3.3	1	1.6	5	2.7
Total	121	100	62	100	183	100

Upon completion of all the items of the Conflict Tactics Scales, participants were presented with the following question which is intended to minimize underreporting, "Have you had any (any other) experiences as a victim of abuse by a partner you are, or were, having a relationship with that I have not asked about?" When Smith (1987) posed this question to his respondents, 10% of the sample disclosed further instances of abuse. If participants responded yes to this question, they were asked to specify what happened and were required to answer the supplementary questions. All participants were also asked if they had ever been sexually assaulted by a partner.

Supplementary Questions. When participants indicated that they had experienced a particular violent act (whether they are the perpetrator or the victim), they were asked further questions concerning the context, subjective interpretation, and consequences of the particular incident. Two questionnaires (see Appendices C and D) were developed to address these issues; one for when the subject is the perpetrator of the act, and the other for when they are the victim. The only differences between the questionnaires are changes in wording intended to reflect whether one is the perpetrator or victim of the particular tactic (i.e., the word 'you' is substituted for 'your partner' and vice versa). The questionnaires include open-ended items, forced choice items, and Likert-type items. Examples of questions assessing context are, 'Please tell me how it started and what happened.', and 'Who started the argument?'. Items such as, 'To what extent do you see yourself as the victim in this situation?', and 'To what extent do you blame yourself for this incident?' are intended to assess subjective interpretation of the violent episode. Examples of items assessing the consequences of violence are, 'How has this experience affected you?', and 'How much physical harm did you inflict on your partner by

engaging in the particular act?'.

Apparatus

All questionnaires were administered to participants through a computer program. This method of administration was used because it was thought that it would simplify the branching in the questionnaires for the participants; confidentiality would be more easily maintained therefore participants would be more comfortable completing the questionnaires; and it would reduce experimenter bias because instructions were given on the monitor.

Twelve IBM (or IBM clone) 286 or better computer terminals located in a computer laboratory in the Department of Psychology at the University of Windsor were used to administer the questionnaire. Dividers were placed between the terminals to ensure privacy. A computer program was developed using Authority programming language to administer the questionnaires[2]. The program specified that respondents have the option to refuse responding to any item for any reason. The computer program and the data were stored on both the hard drive and on 3.5-inch floppy disks. To avoid the possibility that any responses remain on the computer's hard drive where it may be accessible to others, all text files were removed at the end of each day.

Procedure

When recruited, participants were told that the study concerns how conflicts are resolved within intimate relationships. Prior to beginning the study, participants were presented with information concerning the study and were required to give their written consent to participate (see Appendix E). Each participant was seated at an individual terminal. No computer literacy was assumed therefore instructions appeared on the

screen concerning how to use the terminals. Respondents were reminded that their participation is completely voluntary and that they are free to withdraw from the study at any point. They were also assured that their answers are strictly confidential. Respondents were told that they may ask questions at any time before, during, or after the study. The researcher was present during each session.

Following these general instructions, participants were presented with the demographic information questionnaire. Responses on this questionnaire determined the wording of the introduction to the CTS. Participants who indicatde that they were currently involved in a heterosexual relationship were asked to think of conflicts they had with their partner over the last year. If respondents indicated that they had been involved in a heterosexual relationship for a period of less than a year, then they were instructed to think over the duration of their current relationship. Those respondents who indicated they did not currently have a partner were instructed to think back over all of their past relationships.

Presentation of CTS. The CTS was administered so that the items were individually presented to participants. Participants with a current partner were asked how often each tactic was used over the last year. Respondents who indicated they had been involved with their partner for less than a year were asked if each tactic was ever used in the duration of their current relationship. In either case, if the respondent indicated that they had never experienced the first item, then the next item was presented. This was repeated until the subject indicated they had experienced a violence item one or more times. When this occurred, the questions concerning the context, interpretation, and consequences of the act were presented. If the respondent indicated that the act occurred

more than once, then they were instructed to think back to the last occurrence of the act when answering the supplementary questions.

If a respondent indicated they had never perpetrated nor been a victim of any of the acts, they were instructed to think back to conflicts they may have had over the course of previous relationships and they were again presented with the CTS.

Those participants who did not have a current partner were asked whether or not each act had ever occurred in any of their past relationships. When they responded yes to an item, they were asked the same supplementary questions as the participants who had current partners. If they responded no to all of the items, they were then asked if they knew of anyone who has experienced any violence. If they know of someone, they were instructed to specify the relation (i.e., family, friend) and the gender of the person in question and they repeated the procedure. If they knew of no one who has experienced violence, they were asked two questions: "Why do you think males hit their partners?" and "Why do you think females hit their partners?". The third party questions and two open-ended questions were intended to be filler tasks. The purpose of the filler task was to prevent participants from walking out early from the study and causing discomfort to remaining the participants who likely have experienced partner violence.

Following the study, all participants were debriefed through the computer program concerning the purpose of the study (see Appendix F). Prior to leaving, all respondents received a list of local support services for people who have experienced partner violence and some information concerning wife abuse.

Treatment of Data

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in this study. Quantitative responses were placed into dBase IV data files which were part of the computer program. These databases were merged and transferred into a data file in SPSS for Windows for analysis. The independent variable in this study is gender (male and female). Categorical responses (e.g., yes or no) were analyzed through cross-tabulations, multiple response sets, and Chi-square analyses. Responses involving continuous measures (e.g., items involving Likert-type scales) were analyzed using One-Way Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs). Since the current study was largely exploratory, the standard significance level of $p<.05$ was chosen for all analyses.

Qualitative responses were placed into ASCII text files which were merged for each participant. The qualitative data were scrutinized for any trends in themes, content, and reasoning by females and males.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Pertinent Relationship Information

Participants filled in the Conflict Tactics Scale based on a current partner, or if one did not exist, a past partner. As described in Table 2, 78.9% of the females and 73.1% of the males indicated they were involved in a current intimate heterosexual relationship. The median for the duration of current relationships was 23.5 months (M=38.54, SD=35.60) for females and 24 months (M=36.82, SD=31.13) for males. Of the 37 participants who did not have a current partner, 13 males and 24 females indicated that they had been involved in a past relationship. For participants who responded in the context of past relationships, the median time elapsed since these relationships ended was 34 months (M=43.60, SD=29.44); 36.27 for females and 25 for males. All but seven participants (5 males and 2 females) had some current or previous experience with intimate heterosexual relationships (i.e., either dating, going out, seeing, married, or cohabiting). These seven participants were eliminated from all analyses.

There were no significant differences between participants with a current partner and those without on any of the demographic variables; therefore, the data from both groups of participants were collapsed[3]. The collapsed data were used for all of the following analyses.

The Conflict Tactics Scale

Method of Data Analysis.

As suggested by Straus (1979), prevalence rates for each individual item from the

Table 2

Frequencies of Demographic Variables for Male and Female Participants.

Measure	Females (n=121)	Males (n=62)	Total (n=183)
Current Partner			
n	97	49	146
%	80.2	79.0	79.8
Duration of Current Relationship			
Median	23.5	24.0	24.0
Cohabiting			
n	32	20	52
%	33.0	40.8	35.6
Past Partner			
n	23	13	36
%	19.0	21.0	19.7
Time Elapsed Since Past Relationship			
Median	36.3	25.0	34.0

Conflict Tactics Scale were calculated. These rates were calculated separately for men and women and separately for perpetration and victimization of each tactic. Straus (1979) also suggested that the items from the CTS can be recombined to represent minor violence ("threw something", "pushed, grabbed, or shoved", and "slapped"), severe violence ("kicked, bit, or hit with a fist", "hit or tried to hit something", "beat up the other one", "threatened with a knife or gun", "used a knife or gun"), and overall violence (any of above items). Chi-square tests of association were calculated for each individual item, for minor violence, severe violence, and overall violence to assess if there were any differences between men and women in their responses on the Conflict Tactics Scale. Chi-square statistics with a significance level below .05 are reported.

Specific Acts of Violence.

Table 3 lists the frequencies of each of the eight acts of violence from the Conflict Tactics Scale. More females than males were likely to admit that they had thrown something at their partner, $\chi^2(1, n=176) = 4.28$, $p<.05$; slapped their partner, $\chi^2(1, n=174)$, $p<.01$; kicked, bit, or hit their partner with a fist , $\chi^2(1, n=173) = 5.12$, $p<.05$; and, hit or tried to hit their partner with something, $\chi^2(1, n=173) = 4.37$, $p<.05$. There were no significant differences between males and females in pushing, grabbing, or shoving; beating up; threatening with a knife or gun; or using a knife or gun.

More males than females indicated they had a partner throw something at them, $\chi^2(1, n=171) = 13.94$, $p<.000$; and that they had been slapped by a partner, $\chi^2(1, n=171) = 9.37$, $p<.01$. There were no significant differences between males and females on the following violent tactics: pushing, grabbing, or shoving; kicking, biting, or hitting with a

Table 3

Specific Acts of Violence by Gender and Type.

Type of Violence	Females (n=121)		Males (n=62)	
	n	%	n	%
Perpetrator				
Threw something	23*	19.0	5	8.0
Pushed, grabbed, or shoved	38	31.4	12	19.4
Slapped	23**	19.0	4	6.5
Kicked, bit, or hit with a fist	15*	12.4	2	3.2
Hit or tried to hit with something	17*	14.0	3	4.8
Beat up the other one	1	0.8	1	1.6
Threatened with a knife or gun	2	1.7	0	0
Used a knife or gun	2	1.7	1	1.6
Anything else	9	7.4	6	9.7
Victim				
Threw something	9***	7.4	18	29.0
Pushed, grabbed, or shoved	35	28.9	18	29.0
Slapped	8**	6.6	14	22.6
Kicked, bit, or hit with a fist	12	9.9	6	9.7
Hit or tried to hit with something	11	9.1	6	9.7
Beat up	4	3.3	1	1.6
Threatened with a knife or gun	5	4.1	1	1.6
Used a knife or gun	2	1.7	0	0
Anything else	8	6.6	1	1.6

Note. Respondents could indicate they experienced more than one item.

*indicates sex differences at $p<.05$. **indicates sex differences at $p<.01$. ***indicates mean sex differences at $p<.001$.

fist; hitting or trying to hit with something; beating up; threatening with a knife or gun; or using a knife or gun.

Refer to Table 4 for a summary of the frequencies of experiences with minor violence, severe violence, and overall violence.

Minor Violence.

Items k to m ("threw something", "pushed, grabbed, or shoved", and "slapped") were combined to represent minor violence. One hundred and four participants (70 females, 57.9% and 34 males, 54.8%) had experienced at least one minor act of violence. Significantly more females (n=52, 43.0%) than males (n=16, 25.8%) indicated that they had perpetrated a minor act of violence in either a current or past relationship, $\chi^2(1, N=183) = 6.61$, $p<.01$; whereas more males (n=31, 50.0%) than females (n=38, 31.4%) reported being victimized by a current or past partner, $\chi^2(1, N=183) = 4.38$, $p<.05$.

Severe Violence.

Items n to r ("kicked, bit, or hit with a fist", "hit or tried to hit with something", "beat up the other one", "threatened with a knife or gun", and "used a knife or gun") were combined to represent severe violence. Eleven males (17.7%) and 27 females (22.3%) reported either perpetrating or being a victim of severe violence at the hands of a current or past partner. More females (n=24, 19.8%) than males (n=5, 8.1%) indicated that they had perpetrated at least one act of severe violence, $\chi^2(1, n=183) = 5.37$, $p<.05$. Males (n=7, 11.3%) and females (n=7, 5.8%) were equally likely to have been a victim of a severe act of violence by a current or past partner.

Table 4

Partner Violence as Measured by Overall Violence, Minor Violence, and Severe Violence by Gender.

Gender	Overall Violence		Minor Violence		Severe Violence	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Females[a]						
Perpetrator	67**	55.4	52**	43.0	24*	19.8
Victim	43	35.5	38*	31.4	7	5.8
Any	81	66.9	70	57.9	27	22.3
Males[b]						
Perpetrator	21	33.9	16	25.8	5	8.1
Victim	32	51.6	31	50.0	7	11.3
Any	38	61.3	34	54.8	11	17.7
Total[c]						
Perpetrator	88	48.1	68	37.2	29	15.8
Victim	75	41.0	69	37.7	14	7.7
Any	119	65.0	104	56.8	38	20.8

Note. Overall violence is composed of items k through s; minor violence is composed of items k to m; severe violence is composed of items k to r. All items can be found in Appendix B. Respondents could be included in more than one category and could have experienced more than one violent act in a category.

[a]n=121

[b]n=62

[c]n=183

*indicates sex differences at $p<.05$. **indicates sex differences at $p<.01$.

Overall Use of Violence.

Participants who had either perpetrated or been a victim of any one or more of the items from the CTS were included in the category "overall use of violence". Of the 183 participants who indicated they were currently or formerly involved in an intimate heterosexual relationship, 119 (65.0%) reported experiencing violence as either a perpetrator or a victim. Eighty-one females (66.9%) indicated that they had experienced violence; 67 (55.4%) as perpetrators and 43 (35.5%) as victims. Thirty-eight of the 62 male participants (61.3%) reported that they had experienced violence in a current or past relationship; 21 (33.9%) perpetrated violence and 32 (51.6%) were victims of violence. Significantly more females than males indicated they had perpetrated violence, $\chi^2(1, n=183) = 9.51$, $p<.01$.

To see whether the roles of perpetrator and victim are overlapping, participants were labelled as perpetrator only, victim only, or both perpetrator and victim. As shown in Table 5, of the 81 females who had experienced violence, 29 indicated they had both perpetrated and been victims of violence, whereas, 15 of the 38 males who experienced violence were both perpetrators and victims. More females than males reported being only perpetrators of violence, $\chi^2(1, n=119) = 9.86$, $p<.01$. More males than females reported being only victims of violence, $\chi^2(1, n=119) = 11.16$, $p<.001$.

Late Disclosure

In order to minimize underreporting, all participants were asked if they had been victims of any other abuse which they had not already discussed and were asked if they had ever been sexually assaulted by a partner. The association between these experiences

Table 5

Role in Violent Episode by Gender

Role in Violent Episode	Females (n=81)		Males (n=38)	
	n	%	n	%
Perpetrator Only	38**	47.5	7	18.4
Victim Only	14***	17.3	18	47.4
Both Perpetrator and Victim	29	35.8	15	39.5

**indicates sex differences at $p<.01$. ***indicates sex differences at $p<.001$.

and participant gender were analyzed using Chi-Square analyses.

Seventeen participants (9.3%) revealed further victimization of abuse at this point in the survey. Of these, 6 were new reports, that is, they had not previously indicated that they were victims of any of the items from the CTS. Twenty-seven (14.8%) participants disclosed that they had been victims of sexual assault. Significantly more females (n= 26, 21.5%) than males (n=1, 1.6%) reported that they had been sexually assaulted by a partner, $\chi^2(1, n=102) = 6.82$, $p<.01$.

Qualitative Analysis of Responses

Item S (Anything Else). The final item in the CTS, ("anything else not previously mentioned"), allows participants to report their experiences with other resolution tactics which are not listed in the CTS. Straus (1990) suggests that this item should be scored as a violence item, and in particular, a severe violence item. Fifteen participants (9 females and 6 males) indicated that they used a tactic other than those in the list. Nine participants (8 females and 1 male) indicated that they were victims of an act which was not part of the CTS. Sixteen participants (14 females and 2 males) disclosed details concerning the resolution tactic they experienced.

Six of the eight females who provided details of the act they perpetrated used a non-violent tactic (e.g., "my guy uses herion [sic] and I left when I found the needles", "we disagreed about something petty and ended up swearing at each other"). One of the two females who indicated they had used a "violent" tactic, described how she kicked her husband in the shin because she was being choked by him; and the other female indicated that she was play-fighting with her partner when she hit him in the genitals. Of the

seven females who disclosed details of their victimization on this CTS item, three described tactics which were non-violent (e.g., "he got frustrated and hung up on me", "Its [sic] all the put downs and name calling. Degrading you until you think of yourself that way"), and the remaining four constituted acts of severe violence (sexual assault, raped by husband, slammed fingers in door, and threatened to kill with a tire iron). One male perpetrator and one male victim wrote details of their experiences with a tactic not outlined in the CTS. In both cases, the tactic used was non-violent: "Also we played games on how many lives we could ruin. We attempted to outscore the other, it was very sadistic and vicious" and, "She spread lies about my friends, myself, and others", respectively.

Open-ended questions. If participants indicated they experienced one of the acts of violence from the CTS, they were asked a number of open-ended questions (e.g., "Please tell me how it started and what happened?", "What happened after your partner engaged in the particular act?") designed to discern what occurred during the violent episode.

Eleven females reported that they were perpetrators, but not victims of violence; however when they were asked further details about the incident, they indicated that they had been victimized in some way by their partner. Two female participants indicated that they perpetrated an act from the CTS, but when probed for details wrote that they had never been violent with their partner. One male reported that he had never perpetrated any violence but when he wrote about his victimization, he indicated that he had pushed and shoved his partner.

If one takes into account the information gained from late disclosure and from the

qualitative data analysis, the number of female victims of violence jumps from 43 to 55, an increase of 20%. The number of female perpetrators goes down from 67 to 60, a decrease of 5%. The number of male perpetrators goes down one from 21 to 20, as does the number of male victims (from 32 to 31).

Supplementary Questions

Method of Data Analysis

In order to assess the meaning, context, and consequences of the violent acts from the Conflict Tactics Scale, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. If participants indicated they had experienced any of the violent tactics from the CTS, (items k to s, see Appendix B), they were given supplementary measures to assess the meaning, context, and consequences of the particular act.

The variables of interest (i.e., the supplementary questions) were the following: the extent one sees oneself as the aggressor in the situation; the extent one sees oneself as the victim; the extent one blames one's partner for the incident; the extent one blames oneself; the extent one suffers physical harm as a result of the violent episode; the extent one suffers emotional harm; if the incident occurred in the context of an argument; who started the physical violence; the motives behind why one (or one's partner) engaged in the violent act; what one did following the violent episode; if the victim went to a hospital or a doctor; if the victim called the police; and the nature of any physical injuries.

Analysis of Continuous Dependent Variables

Sex differences on the continuous variables (see self as aggressor, see self as victim, blame partner, blame self, physical harm, and emotional harm) were assessed using six one-way Analyses of Variance (ANOVA's) for each individual tactic (items k to r).

There were no significant differences between males and females on their perceptions of the violence that they had perpetrated, on any of the dependent measures (see Table 6 for means and standard deviations on the continuous variables for perpetrators of overall violence); therefore only results concerned with victimization will be reported in detail.

Supplementary Questions for Individual Acts.

Threw Something. Table 7 displays the means and standard deviations for each dependent variable. For participants who indicated that their partner had thrown something at them, males were more likely than females to see themselves as the aggressor in the situation, $F(1,24) = 5.40$, $p<.05$, and females were more likely than males to see themselves as the victim, $F(1,24) = 4.31$, $p<.05$. Females also tended to blame their partner for the incident to a greater extent than males, $F(1,24) = 7.88$, $p<.01$, but there were no significant sex differences in blaming oneself. Females indicated that their partner had emotionally harmed them to a greater extent than indicated by males, $F(1,24) = 13.98$, $p<.001$.

There were no differences between men and women on the amount of physical harm suffered.

Table 6

Mean Sex Differences on Continuous Variables for Perpetrators of Overall Violence.

Variable	Females (n=67)		Males (n=21)	
	M	SD	M	SD
See Self as Aggressor	3.77	1.77	3.95	1.49
See Self as Victim	3.66	1.73	3.73	1.19
Blame Partner	4.65	1.53	4.45	1.57
Blame Self	4.02	1.42	3.78	1.20
Physical Harm	1.76	1.13	1.74	1.16
Emotional Harm	2.83	1.78	2.89	1.48

Note. Responses for Self as Aggressor, Self as Victim, Blame Partner, and Blame Self are based on a 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely) Likert-type scale. Responses for Physical Harm and Emotional Harm are based on a 1 (none at all) to 7 (a great deal) Likert-type scale. Overall Violence is comprised of items k to r from the Conflict Tactics Scale (Appendix B).

Table 7

Mean Sex Differences on Continuous Variables for Victims of Item "Threw Something".

Variable	Females (n=9)		Males (n=18)	
	M	SD	M	SD
See Self as Aggressor	1.33*	1.00	2.44	1.21
See Self as Victim	6.22*	1.39	4.75	1.84
Blame Partner	6.56**	0.73	4.38	2.25
Blame Self	2.11	1.54	2.81	1.38
Physical Harm	3.44	1.74	2.25	1.84
Emotional Harm	5.78***	1.64	3.25	1.61

Note. Responses for Self as Aggressor, Self as Victim, Blame Partner, and Blame Self are based on a 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely) Likert-type scale. Responses for Physical Harm and Emotional Harm are based on a 1 (none at all) to 7 (a great deal) Likert-type scale.

*indicates mean sex differences at $p<.05$. **indicates mean sex differences at $p<.01$. ***indicates mean sex differences at $p<.001$.

Pushed, Grabbed, or Shoved. Refer to Table 8 for the means and standard deviations. Females indicated they suffered both greater physical harm, $F(1,49) = 4.80$, $p<.05$, and greater emotional harm, $F(1,49) = 4.50$, $p<.05$, than males as a result of being pushed, grabbed, or shoved by a partner.

Males and females did not significantly differ on seeing themselves as the aggressor or the victim, or on blaming their partner or themselves.

Slapped. Table 9 displays the means and standard deviations of each dependent variable. Females were more likely than males to blame their partner for the violent episode, $F(1,20) = 5.53$, $p<.05$, but males and females did not differ in the extent to which they blamed themselves for the violence. Females indicated they suffered greater physical harm, $F(1,19) = 5.15$, $p<.05$, and greater emotional harm than males, $F(1,19) = 9.00$, $p<.01$.

There were no significant sex differences on seeing oneself as the aggressor nor on seeing oneself as the victim.

Kicked, Bit, or Hit With a Fist. For the means and standard deviations, refer to Table 10. Females were more likely than males to see themselves as the victim in the situation, $F(1,13) = 8.76$, $p<.01$, but there was no significant difference in seeing oneself as the aggressor. Females tended to blame their partner for the incident to a greater extent than males, $F(1,13) = 7.08$, $p<.05$, but the sexes did not differ in terms of attributing blame to themselves. As with the previous items, females indicated that they suffered greater emotional harm, $F(1,13) = 13.22$, $p<.01$. The finding that females also suffered greater physical harm than males approached significance, $F(1,13) = 3.54$, $p=.08$.

Hit or Tried to Hit With Something. Table 11 displays the means and standard

Table 8

Mean Sex Differences on Continuous Variables for Victims of Item "Pushed, Grabbed, or Shoved".

Variable	Females (n=35)		Males (n=18)	
	M	SD	M	SD
Self as Aggressor	2.03	1.42	1.94	1.20
Self as Victim	5.36	2.06	4.94	2.01
Blame Partner	5.56	1.74	5.00	1.94
Blame Self	2.44	1.28	2.65	1.69
Physical Harm	2.94*	1.74	1.88	1.26
Emotional Harm	4.97*	2.24	3.50	2.34

Note. Responses for Self as Aggressor, Self as Victim, Blame Partner, and Blame Self are based on a 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely) Likert-type scale. Responses for Physical Harm and Emotional Harm are based on a 1 (none at all) to 7 (a great deal) Likert-type scale.
*indicates mean sex differences at $p<.05$.

Table 9

Mean Sex Differences on Continuous Variables for Victims of Item "Slapped".

Variable	Females (n=8)		Males (n=14)	
	M	SD	M	SD
See Self as Aggressor	2.13	1.73	1.54	1.13
See Self as Victim	5.75	1.49	4.15	2.38
Blame Partner	6.13*	0.99	4.00	2.42
Blame Self	2.38	1.51	2.69	2.06
Physical Harm	3.25*	1.67	1.75	1.29
Emotional Harm	5.38**	1.92	2.75	1.91

Note. Responses for Self as Aggressor, Self as Victim, Blame Partner, and Blame Self are based on a 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely) Likert-type scale. Responses for Physical Harm and Emotional Harm are based on a 1 (none at all) to 7 (a great deal) Likert-type scale.
*indicates mean sex differences at $p<.05$. **indicates mean sex differences at $p<.01$.

Table 10

Mean Sex Differences on Continuous Variables for Victims of Item "Kicked, Bit, or Hit With a Fist".

Variable	Females (n=12)		Males (n=6)	
	M	SD	M	SD
See Self as Aggressor	2.13	1.46	1.50	1.22
See Self as Victim	5.75**	1.75	3.00	1.67
Blame Partner	6.00*	1.51	3.33	2.25
Blame Self	2.88	2.10	2.50	2.51
Physical Harm	3.88	2.03	2.00	1.55
Emotional Harm	5.00**	1.69	2.00	1.26

Note. Responses for Self as Aggressor, Self as Victim, Blame Partner, and Blame Self are based on a 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely) Likert-type scale. Responses for Physical Harm and Emotional Harm are based on a 1 (none at all) to 7 (a great deal) Likert-type scale.
*indicates mean sex differences at $p<.05$. **indicates mean sex differences at $p<.01$.

Table 11

Mean Sex Differences on Continuous Variables for Victims of Item "Hit or Tried to Hit With Something".

Variable	Females (n=11)		Males (n=6)	
	M	SD	M	SD
See Self as Aggressor	2.10	1.66	2.40	1.52
See Self as Victim	5.40	2.22	3.40	1.82
Blame Partner	5.80**	1.40	3.40	1.95
Blame Self	2.20	1.40	3.60	2.30
Physical Harm	2.50	1.35	1.80	1.79
Emotional Harm	5.30*	2.16	2.20	1.64

Note. Responses for Self as Aggressor, Self as Victim, Blame Partner, and Blame Self are based on a 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely) Likert-type scale. Responses for Physical Harm and Emotional Harm are based on a 1 (none at all) to 7 (a great deal) Likert-type scale.
*indicates mean sex differences at $p<.05$. **indicates mean sex differences at $p<.01$.

deviations of each dependent variable. Females were more likely than males to blame their partner for the situation, $F(1,14) = 7.61$, $p<.05$; and to suffer emotional harm, $F(1,14) = 7.87$, $p<.05$. Significant differences between males and females were not found on the remaining continuous variables (seeing oneself as the aggressor, seeing oneself as the victim, blaming oneself, and physical harm).

Beat up the other one, Threatened with a knife or gun, and Used a knife or gun. The item "beat up the other one" did yield significant sex differences on the extent of emotional harm and the extent to which one sees oneself as the victim; however these differences should be considered with caution since they are based on the responses of one male and four females. The item "threatened with a knife or gun" yielded significant sex differences on the extent of emotional harm; but again, these differences are based on the responses of one male and two females. An analysis of the sex differences on the item "used a knife or gun" was not possible because no males indicated they were victims of this act of violence.

Supplementary Questions for Minor Violence.

Participants' responses on each continuous dependent measure (see self as aggressor, see self as victim, blame partner, blame self, physical harm, and emotional harm) were averaged over the CTS items "threw something", "pushed, grabbed, or shoved", and "slapped" and were analyzed using ANOVA's. Refer to Table 12 for descriptive statistics.

When looking at only minor violence (items k to m of the CTS in Appendix B), females were more likely than males to blame their partner for any minor acts of

Table 12

Mean Sex Differences on Continuous Variables for Victims of Minor Violence.

Variable	Females (n=38)		Males (n=31)	
	M	SD	M	SD
See Self as Aggressor	2.15	1.51	2.02	1.01
See Self as Victim	5.23	2.01	4.38	2.01
Blame Partner	5.55**	1.68	4.26	2.07
Blame Self	2.54	1.33	2.90	1.67
Physical Harm	2.90**	1.68	1.76	1.37
Emotional Harm	4.85***	2.18	3.01	1.70

Note. Responses for Self as Aggressor, Self as Victim, Blame Partner, and Blame Self are based on a 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely) Likert-type scale. Responses for Physical Harm and Emotional Harm are based on a 1 (none at all) to 7 (a great deal) Likert-type scale. Minor Violence is comprised of items k to m from the Conflict Tactics Scale (Appendix B).
*indicates mean sex differences at $p<.05$. **indicates mean sex differences at $p<.01$. ***indicates mean sex differences at $p<.001$.

violence, $F(1,64) = 7.78$, $p<.01$. Females indicated that they suffered both greater physical injury, $F(1,64) = 8.55$, $p<.01$, and greater emotional harm, $F(1,63)= 13.52$, $p<.001$, than did males. There were no differences on seeing oneself as the aggressor, seeing oneself as the victim, and the extent one blames oneself for the violence.

Supplementary Questions for Severe Violence.

Participants' responses on each continuous dependent measure (see self as aggressor, see self as victim, blame partner, blame self, physical harm, and emotional harm) were averaged over the CTS items "kicked, bit, or hit with a fist", "hit or tried to hit with something", "beat up the other one", "threatened with a knife or gun", and "used a knife or gun". Sex differences on the six measures were assessed using ANOVA's. Refer to Table 13 for the means and standard deviations for each dependent variable.

When considering only the items which constitute severe violence, females were more likely than males to see themselves as the victim in the situation, $F(1,23) = 7.20$, $p<.01$, and to blame their partner, $F(1,23) = 8.47$, $p<.01$. Although there was no significant difference in physical harm, females indicated that they suffered greater emotional harm as a result of any severe act of violence, $F(1,23) = 15.71$, $p<.001$. No differences were found on seeing oneself as the aggressor and blaming oneself for the violence.

Supplementary Questions for Overall Violence.

Participants' responses on the continuous dependent measures (see self as aggressor, see self as victim, blame partner, blame self, physical harm, and emotional

Table 13

Mean Sex Differences on Continuous Variables for Victims of Severe Violence.

Variable	Females (n=7)		Males (n=7)	
	M	SD	M	SD
See Self as Aggressor	2.24	1.46	1.88	1.33
See Self as Victim	5.28**	2.00	3.06	1.70
Blame Partner	5.56**	1.50	3.38	2.15
Blame Self	2.57	1.62	2.56	2.23
Physical Harm	2.53	1.46	1.63	1.38
Emotional Harm	5.08***	1.91	2.06	1.37

Note. Responses for Self as Aggressor, Self as Victim, Blame Partner, and Blame Self are based on a 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely) Likert-type scale. Responses for Physical Harm and Emotional Harm are based on a 1 (none at all) to 7 (a great deal) Likert-type scale. Severe Violence is comprised of items n to r from the Conflict Tactics Scale (Appendix B).

**indicates mean sex differences at $p<.01$. ***indicates mean sex differences at $p<.001$.

harm) were averaged over all of the CTS violence items ("threw something", "pushed, grabbed, or shoved", "slapped", "kicked, bit, or hit with a fist", "hit or tried to hit with something", "beat up the other one", "threatened with a knife or gun", and "used a knife or gun"). Sex differences on the six measures were assessed using ANOVA's. Table 14 displays the means and standard deviations for each dependent variable.

As a result of any one or more of the eight violent acts from the CTS, females were more likely than males to blame their partner for the violence, $F(1,67) = 8.14$, $p<.01$, while self-blame was uniformly low. Overall, females were more likely than males to suffer physical harm , $F(1,67) = 8.56$, $p<.01$, and emotional harm, $F(1,67) = 17.14$, $p<.000$. There were no sex differences in seeing oneself as the aggressor or seeing oneself as the victim.

Analysis of Categorical Dependent Variables

Associations between sex and the categorical variables (who started the physical violence, motives, what one did following the violent episode, if the victim went to the hospital or to a doctor, if the victim called the police, and the nature of any physical injuries) were analyzed using the Chi-square statistics. The criterion significance level for all analyses was $p<.05$.

There were no significant differences between males and females on their perceptions of the violence that they had perpetrated on any of the dependent measures (refer to Table 15 for multiple response sets for the categorical variables for perpetrators of overall violence); therefore, only results concerned with victimization will be reported. There were also no significant differences between the sexes on calling the police and the nature of any injuries, therefore these results will not be discussed further.

Table 14

Mean Sex Differences on Continuous Variables for Victims of Overall Violence.

Variable	Females (n=43)		Males (n=32)	
	M	SD	M	SD
See Self as Aggressor	2.36	1.56	2.00	1.00
See Self as Victim	5.14	1.90	4.36	1.97
Blame Partner	5.53**	1.57	4.27	2.08
Blame Self	2.63	1.39	2.84	1.67
Physical Harm	2.84**	1.70	1.72	1.35
Emotional Harm	4.84***	2.07	2.89	1.66

Note. Responses for Self as Aggressor, Self as Victim, Blame Partner, and Blame Self are based on a 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely) Likert-type scale. Responses for Physical Harm and Emotional Harm are based on a 1 (none at all) to 7 (a great deal) Likert-type scale. Overall Violence is comprised of items k to r from the Conflict Tactics Scale (Appendix B).

**indicates mean sex differences at $p<.01$. ***indicates mean sex differences at $p<.001$.

Table 15
Multiple Response Sets for Categorical Variables for Perpetrators of Overall Violence by Gender.

Variable	Females (n=67)		Males (n=21)	
	n	%	n	%
Who Started Physical Violence				
Self	68	57.1	9	39.1
Partner	23	19.3	7	30.4
Both	10	8.4	4	17.4
Don't Know	18	15.1	3	13.0
Motives				
Frustration/Anger	84	73.0	14	56.0
Self-defense	8	7.0	4	16.0
Retaliate/hit back	5	4.3	3	12.0
Felt threatened	4	3.5	0	0.0
To harm	2	1.7	0	0.0
To intimidate	4	3.5	2	8.0
To "get something"	1	0.9	0	0.0
Jealousy	3	2.6	1	4.0
Other	4	3.5	1	4.0
What Did You Do After				
Cried	8	6.9	7	26.9
Yelled or cursed	25	21.6	3	11.5
Hit back/threw something	4	3.4	3	11.5
Ran out	13	11.2	5	19.2
Called a friend or relative	1	0.9	0	0.0
Other	65	56.0	8	30.8
Hospital or Doctor				
No	51	96.2	13	100.0
Yes	2	3.8	0	0.0

Note. Percentages are based on the number of responses, not the number of cases. Overall Violence is comprised of items k to r from the Conflict Tactics Scale (Appendix B).

Supplementary Questions for Individual Acts.

Threw Something. Table 16 displays the number of responses in each category for each dependent variable. For participants who indicated that their partner had thrown something at them, women were more likely than men to cry following the incident, $\chi^2(3, N=25) = 7.81$, $p<.05$; and to go to the hospital or see a doctor as a result of the incident, $\chi^2(3, N=25) = 4.43$, $p<.05$. There were no significant differences between males and females on who started the violence and on motives.

Pushed, Grabbed, or Shoved. Males and females did not significantly differ on any of the dependent measures (who started the violence, motives, what did victim do after the violent episode, and if the victim went to the hospital or to a doctor). Refer to Table 17 for the number of responses in each category for each dependent variable.

Slapped. More females than males reported that they cried following the incident, $\chi^2(4, N=21) = 12.95$, $p<.01$. In terms of motives, males and females were equally likely to perceive having been slapped by a partner out of frustration or anger, however, more females than males indicated they believed their partner slapped them to intimidate, $\chi^2(6, N=20) = 14.56$, $p<.05$. There were no significant differences on who started the violence and if the victim went to the hospital or doctor. Table 18 displays the number of responses in each category for each dependent variable.

Kicked, Bit, or Hit With a Fist. For the number of responses in each category for each dependent variable, refer to Table 19. Men and women did not differ in their responses to any of the categorical variables (who started the violence, motives, what did victim do after the violent episode, and if the victim went to the hospital or to a doctor).

Hit or Tried to Hit With Something. More females than males indicated that their

Table 16
Sex Differences on Categorical Variables for Victims of Item "Threw Something"

Variable	Females (n=9)		Males (n=18)	
	n	%	n	%
Who Started Physical Violence				
Self	0	0	1	7.1
Partner	9	100	14	82.4
Both	0	0	2	11.8
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Motives				
Frustration/Anger	4	44.4	12	70.6
Self-defense	0	0	1	5.9
Retaliate/hit back	0	0	1	5.9
Felt threatened	1	11.1	1	5.9
To harm	0	0	1	5.9
To intimidate	3	33.3	0	0
To "get something"	0	0	0	0
Jealousy	1	11.1	1	5.9
Other	0	0	0	0
What Did You Do After*				
Cried	4	44.4	1	6.3
Yelled or cursed	0	0	4	25.0
Hit back/threw something	0	0	0	0
Ran out	2	22.2	4	25.0
Called a friend or relative	0	0	0	0
Other	3	33.3	7	43.8
Hospital or Doctor*				
No	5	62.5	7	100
Yes	3	37.5	0	0

Note. Categories are non-overlapping. For each dependent variable, participants could only select one category as their response, therefore n indicates the number of participants who chose that category as their response to the particular variable.
*indicates sex differences at $p<.05$.

Table 17
Sex Differences on Categorical Variables for Victims of Item "Pushed, Grabbed, or Shoved".

Variable	Females (n=35)		Males (n=18)	
	n	%	n	%
Who Started Physical Violence				
Self	1	2.9	0	0
Partner	25	73.5	10	58.8
Both	1	2.9	3	17.6
Don't Know	6	17.6	4	23.5
Motives				
Frustration/Anger	16	47.1	11	64.7
Self-defense	1	2.9	1	5.9
Retaliate/hit back	0	0	0	0
Felt threatened	3	8.8	0	0
To harm	1	2.9	1	5.9
To intimidate	9	26.5	2	11.8
To "get something"	2	5.9	0	0
Jealousy	2	5.9	1	5.9
Other	0	0	1	0.9
What Did You Do After				
Cried	16	47.1	3	18.8
Yelled or cursed	5	14.7	2	12.5
Hit back/threw something	1	2.9	1	6.3
Ran out	3	8.8	4	25.0
Called a friend or relative	3	8.8	0	0
Other	6	17.6	6	37.5
Hospital or Doctor				
No	23	85.2	7	100
Yes	4	14.8	0	0

Note. Categories are non-overlapping. For each dependent variable, participants could only select one category as their response, therefore n indicates the number of participants who chose that category as their response to the particular variable.

Table 18
Sex Differences on Categorical Variables for Victims of Item "Slapped".

Variable	Females (n=8)		Males (n=14)	
	n	%	n	%
Who Started Physical Violence				
Self	0	0	1	7.7
Partner	8	100	11	84.6
Both	0	0	1	7.7
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Motives*				
Frustration/Anger	4	50	5	41.7
Self-defense	0	0	0	0
Retaliate/hit back	0	0	1	8.3
Felt threatened	0	0	0	0
To harm	0	0	2	16.7
To intimidate	4	50	0	0
To "get something"	0	0	0	0
Jealousy	0	0	2	16.7
Other	0	0	1	8.3
What Did You Do After**				
Cried	6	66.7	2	16.7
Yelled or cursed	0	0	3	25.0
Hit back/threw something	0	0	1	8.3
Ran out	3	33.3	2	16.7
Called a friend or relative	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	4	33.3
Hospital or Doctor				
No	7	87.5	4	100
Yes	1	12.5	0	0

Note. Categories are non-overlapping. For each dependent variable, participants could only select one category as their response, therefore n indicates the number of participants who chose that category as their response to the particular variable.
*indicates sex differences at $p<.05$. **indicates sex differences at $p<.01$.

Table 19

Sex Differences on Categorical Variables for Victims of Item "Kicked, Bit or Hit With a Fist".

Variable	Females (n=12)		Males (n=6)	
	n	%	n	%
Who Started Physical Violence				
Self	1	12.5	0	0
Partner	6	75.0	5	83.3
Both	0	0	1	16.7
Don't Know	1	12.5	0	0
Motives				
Frustration/Anger	5	62.5	3	50.0
Self-defense	0	0	0	0
Retaliate/hit back	0	0	0	0
Felt threatened	0	0	0	0
To harm	0	0	2	33.3
To intimidate	0	0	0	0
To "get something"	0	0	0	0
Jealousy	2	25.0	1	16.7
Other	1	12.5	0	0
What Did You Do After				
Cried	5	62.5	1	16.7
Yelled or cursed	0	0	2	33.3
Hit back/threw something	0	0	0	0
Ran out	1	12.5	2	33.3
Called a friend or relative	0	0	0	0
Other	2	25.0	1	16.7
Hospital or Doctor				
No	6	85.7	2	66.7
Yes	1	14.3	1	33.3

Note. Categories are non-overlapping. For each dependent variable, participants could only select one category as their response, therefore n indicates the number of participants who chose that category as their response to the particular variable.

partner started the physical violence, $\chi^2(3, N=15) = 8.66$, $p<.01$. Significant differences between males and females were not found on the remaining dependent variables. Table 20 displays the number of responses in each category for each dependent variable.

Beat up the other one, Threatened with a knife or gun, and Used a knife or gun. Analyses of sex differences on the items "beat up the other one", "threatened with a knife or gun", and "used a knife or gun" were not possible because the number of males and females who reported being victims of these acts was too small.

Multiple Response Sets

Multiple response sets were formed for each categorical variable (who started the violence, motives, what did victim do after the violent act, if the victim went to the hospital or doctor) across the CTS items representing minor violence, severe violence, and overall violence. Since the categories are not independent (e.g.., a participant may indicate their partner started the violence for the item "threw something", but may indicate that they started the violence when they pushed their partner) Chi-Square analyses could not be conducted (Chi-Square assumes independence of categories). The multiple response sets will be used solely for descriptive purposes

Minor Violence. Multiple response sets were formed for each categorical variable (who started the violence, motives, what did victim do after the violent act, if the victim went to the hospital or doctor) across the CTS items "threw something", "pushed, grabbed, or shoved", and "slapped", (refer to Table 21). The multiple response sets reveal that more females than males believed that their partners were violent in order to intimidate them; whereas, more males than females indicated that their partners were

Table 20
Sex Differences on Categorical Variables for Victims of Item "Hit or Tried to Hit With Something".

	Females (n=11)		Males (n=6)	
Variable	n	%	n	%
Who Started Physical Violence**				
Self	1	10.0	0	0
Partner	9	90.0	2	40.0
Both	0	0	1	20.0
Don't Know	0	0	2	40.0
Motives				
Frustration/Anger	4	40.0	3	60.0
Self-defense	0	0	1	20.0
Retaliate/hit back	0	0	0	0
Felt threatened	1	10.0	0	0
To harm	0	0	1	20.0
To intimidate	4	40.0	0	0
To "get something"	0	0	0	0
Jealousy	0	0	0	0
Other	1	10.0	0	0
What Did You Do After				
Cried	4	44.4	0	0
Yelled or cursed	1	11.1	2	40.0
Hit back/threw something	0	0	0	0
Ran out	2	22.2	1	20.0
Called a friend or relative	0	0	0	0
Other	2	22.2	2	40.0
Hospital or Doctor				
No	6	85.7	1	100
Yes	1	14.3	0	0

Note. Categories are non-overlapping. For each dependent variable, participants could only select one category as their response, therefore n indicates the number of participants who chose that category as their response to the particular variable.
**indicates sex differences at $p<.01$.

Table 21
Multiple Response Sets for Categorical Variables for Victims of Minor Violence by Gender.

Variable	Females (n=38)		Males (n=31)	
	n	%	n	%
Who Started Physical Violence				
Self	1	2.0	2	4.3
Partner	42	84.0	35	74.5
Both	1	2.0	6	12.8
Don't Know	6	12.0	4	8.5
Motives				
Frustration/Anger	24	47.1	28	62.2
Self-defense	1	2.0	2	4.4
Retaliate/hit back	0	0	2	4.4
Felt threatened	4	7.8	1	2.2
To harm	1	2.0	4	8.9
To intimidate	16	31.4	2	4.4
To "get something"	2	3.9	0	0
Jealousy	3	5.9	4	8.9
Other	0	0	2	4.4
What Did You Do After				
Cried	26	55.3	6	13.6
Yelled or cursed	5	10.6	9	20.5
Hit back/threw something	1	2.1	2	4.5
Ran out	8	17.0	10	22.7
Called a friend or relative	3	6.4	0	0
Other	9	19.1	17	38.6
Hospital or Doctor				
No	35	81.4	18	100
Yes	8	18.6	0	0

Note. Percentages are based on the number of responses to that category, not the number of cases. Minor Violence is comprised of items k to m from the Conflict Tactics Scale (Appendix B).

violent in self-defense or to retaliate. More females than males indicated that they cried following the violence and went to a hospital or a doctor as the result of one or more acts of minor violence.

Severe Violence. Multiple response sets were formed for each categorical variable (who started the violence, motives, what did victim do after the violent act, if the victim went to the hospital or doctor) across the CTS items "kicked, bit, or hit with a fist", "hit or tried to hit with something", "beat up the other one", "threatened with a knife or gun", and "used a knife or gun", (refer to Table 22).

More females than males indicated that they believed their partners used violence to intimidate them; whereas males were more likely than females to indicate that they believed their partners were violent in self-defense. As with minor violence, females who were victims of severe violence were more likely than males to cry following the violence; whereas, males were more likely to yell or curse.

Overall Violence. Multiple response sets were formed for each categorical variable (who started the violence, motives, what did victim do after the violent act, if the victim went to the hospital or doctor) across the all of the CTS violence items ("threw something", "pushed, grabbed, or shoved", "slapped", "kicked, bit, or hit with a fist", "beat up the other one", "threatened with a knife or gun", and "used a knife or gun", (refer to Table 23).

Perusal of the multiple response sets revealed that, overall, more females than males indicated that their partners were violent to intimidate them. Males were more likely than females to report that their partners hit them in self-defense. Females and males were equally likely to believe that their partner hit them to harm them, out of

Table 22
Multiple Response Sets for Categorical Variables for Victims of Severe Violence by Gender.

Variable	Females (n=7)		Males (n=7)	
	n	%	n	%
Who Started Physical Violence				
Self	2	7.1	0	0
Partner	25	89.3	8	61.5
Both	0	0	2	15.4
Don't Know	1	3.6	3	23.1
Motives				
Frustration/Anger	11	39.3	6	46.2
Self-defense	0	0	2	15.4
Retaliate/hit back	0	0	0	0
Felt threatened	2	7.1	0	0
To harm	1	3.6	3	23.1
To intimidate	9	32.1	0	0
To "get something"	1	3.6	0	0
Jealousy	2	7.1	2	15.4
Other	2	7.1	0	0
What Did You Do After				
Cried	14	51.9	1	7.7
Yelled or cursed	1	3.7	4	30.8
Hit back/threw something	0	0	0	0
Ran out	6	22.2	4	30.8
Called a friend or relative	0	0	0	0
Other	6	22.2	4	30.8
Hospital or Doctor				
No	18	85.7	3	75.0
Yes	3	14.3	1	25.0

Note. Percentages are based on the number of responses, not the number of cases. Severe Violence is comprised of items n to r from the Conflict Tactics Scale (Appendix B).

Table 23
Multiple Response Sets for Categorical Variables for Victims of Overall Violence by Gender.

Variable	Females (n=43)		Males (n=32)	
	n	%	n	%
Who Started Physical Violence				
Self	3	3.8	2	3.3
Partner	67	85.9	43	71.7
Both	1	1.3	8	13.3
Don't Know	7	9.0	7	11.7
Motives				
Frustration/Anger	35	44.3	34	58.6
Self-defense	1	1.3	4	6.9
Retaliate/hit back	0	0	2	3.4
Felt threatened	6	7.6	1	1.7
To harm	2	2.5	7	12.1
To intimidate	25	31.6	2	3.4
To "get something"	3	3.8	0	0
Jealousy	5	6.3	6	10.3
Other	2	2.5	2	3.4
What Did You Do After				
Cried	40	50.6	7	12.3
Yelled or cursed	6	7.6	13	22.8
Hit back/threw something	1	1.3	2	3.5
Ran out	14	17.7	14	24.6
Called a friend or relative	3	3.8	0	0
Other	15	19.0	21	36.8
Hospital or Doctor				
No	43	79.6	17	94.4
Yes	11	20.4	1	5.6

Note. Percentages are based on the number of responses, not the number of cases. Overall Violence is comprised of items k to r from the Conflict Tactics Scale (Appendix B).

frustration or anger, and out of jealousy. More females than males cried or called a relative or friend following a violent episode; whereas, males were more likely to curse or yell at their partner. More females than males reported that they went to the hospital or a doctor as a result of violence.

Context.

Straus (1979) stresses in the introduction to the CTS that participants should think about some of the resolution tactics that they and their partner have used when they have had disputes. This implies that participants would disclose their experiences with violence which occurred only in the context of an argument. Participants in the present study were asked if the violent act took place in the context of an argument. This variable was considered by itself and was used to determine if participants are revealing experiences with violence which occurred in the context of an argument as assumed by Straus.

Of the 287 episodes of violence which participants discussed, 87 (30.3%) did not occur in the context of an argument. Females either perpetrated or were victims of 200 acts of violence. Thirty-one percent of these episodes (28.9% as perpetrator and 34.2% as victim) did not occur in the context of an argument. Of the 87 acts of violence experienced by males, 28.7% of these (29.6% as perpetrator and 28.3% as victim) did not occur in the context of an argument.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Research conducted with the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) has consistently demonstrated that females are as likely as males to use violence against their partners (e.g., Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1988; Browning & Dutton, 1986; Gelles & Straus, 1988; Kennedy & Dutton, 1989; Sommer, Barnes, & Murray, 1989; Steinmetz, 1981; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). This is in direct contradiction to the findings from archival research such as analysis of police records, court records, and hospital records, which demonstrate that females are much more likely than males to be victimized by their partners, (e.g., Chester & Streather, 1972; Dobash& Dobash, 1977/78; Levinger, 1966; O'Brien, 1971; Stark, Fliteraft & Frazier, 1979). Many critics of the CTS (e.g., Berk, Berk, Loseke, & Rauma, 1983; DeKeseredy, 1991; Dobash & Dobash, 1977/78; Kurz, 1989) note that if the scale were to take into account the actors' interpretations of the events, the context in which the violent act took place, and the consequences of the violence, the finding of sexual symmetry in the use of partner violence would not be valid.

In the present study, participants were asked, through the use of a computer program, which tactics from the CTS they had experienced as perpetrator or victim in either a current or past intimate heterosexual relationship. If respondents indicated they had experienced one of the items from the CTS, they were asked to provide details concerning the meaning, context, and consequences of the particular act.

Prevalence of Partner Violence

It was hypothesized that females would be as likely as males to have perpetrated and been victims of violence at the hands of a partner as measured by the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS). Consistent with previous research conducted with the CTS and in support of this hypothesis, females and males were equally likely to indicate that they had been victims of violence by a current or past partner, (refer to Tables 3 and 4). Although males and females were equally likely to indicate having been victims of a "severe" act of violence ("kicking, biting, or hitting with a fist", "hitting or trying to hit with something", "beat up the other one", "threatened with a knife or gun", "used a knife or gun"), males were more likely than females to report being victims of a "minor" act of violence ("throwing something", "pushing, grabbing, or shoving", "slapping"). Specifically, more males than females indicated that their partner threw something at them and/or slapped them.

A surprising finding was that significantly more females than males indicated that they had perpetrated at least one act of violence listed in the CTS against their partner, (refer to Tables 3 and 4). Females were more likely than males to report perpetrating both "minor" and "severe" acts of violence against a current or past partner. The tactics which more females than males reported perpetrating were "throwing something at their partner", "slapping their partner", "kicking, biting, or hitting their partner with a fist", and "hitting or trying to hit their partner with something".

The proportion of participants who reported experiencing violence (two-thirds) is particularly high in this study. Studies of courtship violence experiences using college samples consistently report rates of overall violence below 50%, (e.g., Arias, Samios, &

O'Leary, 1987, 26%-50%; Cate, Henton, Koval, Christopher, & Lloyd, 1982, 22.3%; Makepeace, 1986, 16.7%; Pedersen & Thomas, 1992, 45.8%). Several features of the current study may have contributed to increased reporting. First, it may be the case that the computer administration of the measures made the participant more confident about the confidentiality of their responses, and consequently they may have felt more comfortable disclosing their experiences. Second, in most previous research conducted with University students, participants were asked about their experiences in either a current or past relationship. This study allowed participants to think about a past relationship if there was no violence in their current relationship. This led to a higher percentage of participants having the opportunity to report their experiences of violence.

Critics of the CTS, (e.g., Dobash & Dobash, 1977/78; Saunders, 1986) have suggested that the scale, by itself, inflates the number of female perpetrators and underestimates the number of female victims of violence. In order to test this criticism, three factors were examined more closely: First, in the standard administration suggested by Straus, the final item from the CTS ("anything else") is scored as a violence item. In order to determine if the scoring is correct, the participants' response to the open-ended questions concerning this item were examined. Second, participants were asked two general questions concerning any other abuse or any sexual abuse they had suffered at the hands of their partner. Participants' responses to these two questions were examined. Third, all of the qualitative data collected were scrutinized to determine if there were inconsistencies in participants' responses (e.g., if when asked details about perpetrated violence, they write about victimization which is not reported in the CTS). These factors were found to raise serious questions about the validity of the CTS scores.

Straus included one final item ("anything else not previously mentioned") to allow participants to report their experiences with any other conflict resolution tactic not included in the CTS. Straus (1990b) suggested that this item should be included as a violent tactic, and specifically, a severe act of violence. Of the 24 participants who reported experiencing "another act of violence not previously mentioned", 16 disclosed details of the act. Six of the eight females who reported perpetrating another act did not use a violent tactic, but engaged in a non-violent action (e.g., "...return all of the things he gave me...", "my guy uses heroin and I left when I found the needles"). Of the seven females who indicated that they were victims of another tactic not outlined in the list, three were non-violent tactics, and the remaining four constituted severe violence (sexual assault, raped by husband, slammed fingers in door, threatened to kill with a tire iron). One male disclosed details of his victimization, and one male disclosed details of an act he perpetrated. In both cases, the tactic was non-violent.

There appears to be some confusion as to the direction of scoring for this particular item. If this item is scored as a violent tactic, then it would artificially inflate the violent tactics rate. For female participants, reconsideration of this item alone dropped the rate of perpetration by 5%.

Following completion of the CTS, participants were asked two questions developed by Smith (1987) aimed at reducing underreporting of victimization: "Have you had any (any other) experiences as a victim of abuse by a partner who you are, or were, having a relationship with that I have not asked about?" and "Have you ever been sexually assaulted? By that I mean forced to have sex against your will by a partner?".

When asked if they had ever experienced any other abuse by a partner which they

had not previously mentioned , 10% of participants revealed further victimization. Of these 35% had not previously indicated that they were victims of any of the items from the CTS. Six participants described how they were victims of emotional or psychological abuse. Four participants indicated they were victims of violence which could have been classified as one of the acts from the CTS ("threw a bottle of nail polish remover at me", "beat the shit out of me", "punched me in the head and face several times", "hit me...and threw a beer bottle at me"). Two participants indicated they had been sexually assaulted, and two participants described acts which were not part of the CTS ("tried to kill me by pushing me out the window of an eighth-storey apartment", "he would tie me up, naked, on the bed, and burn my skin in various places").

When participants were asked if they had ever been sexually assaulted by a partner, 15% of participants (26 females and 1 male) revealed they had been victims of sexual assault by a partner. Approximately 40% of these females had not reported any victimization of items from the CTS and 27% had not reported any victimization from the CTS or from Smith's first question.

As suggested by Smith (1987), it appears that prompting participants to remember other victimizations leads to late disclosures of acts which are listed under the CTS. It is also possible that participants felt that the item listed in the CTS did not adequately described the violent act. For example, one participant wrote "...he hit me, ...and...he threw a bear [sic] bottle at me." In this case, the participant should have reported that their partner "kicked, bit, or hit them with a fist" and "threw something, but they did not report either incident in the CTS. Participants' responses to these two questions clearly demonstrate that the CTS underestimates female victimization by failing to take into

account sexual violence and other forms of violence such as burning and trying to kill in ways other than by a knife or gun.

As a result of scrutinizing participants' responses to the open-ended questions concerning details of the violent episode, it was found that approximately 10% of females who indicated that they had perpetrated an act of violence were actually victims of acts they had not reported when responding to the CTS. Two females indicated that they had perpetrated an act from the CTS, but when asked about details, specifically indicated that they had never been violent with their partners. One male reported that he had never perpetrated any of the acts from the CTS, but when writing about being victimized, he indicated that he had pushed and shoved his partner. It appears as though there is some confusion in the participants' minds about their experiences with violence. It is possible that they are purposely misrepresenting their experiences, or that they simply do not remember the violent episode. Females who underreported their victimization may have felt that they had already written about the incident and to avoid branching into the supplementary questions chose to indicate they had not been victims of violence[4].

Recoding of these acts in relation to the CTS would lead to an increase of 9% in the victimization rate of females and a 2% decrease in the perpetration rate of females. The change in rates for males is minimal.

Taking into account the extra information gained through the two additional questions ("Have you had any (any other) experiences as a victim of abuse by a partner who you are, or were, having a relationship with that I have not asked about?" and "Have you ever been sexually assaulted? By that I mean forced to have sex against your will by a partner?"), the last item in the CTS ("anything else"), and general scrutiny of the

open-ended supplementary questions, the number of female perpetrators decreased by approximately 5% and the number of female victims increased by 20%. The number of male perpetrators and victims essentially, did not change. It is clear that the CTS, by simply counting which violent acts a person is victimized by or perpetrates, is inadequate in providing an accurate measure of prevalence rates of violence.

It is not simply in this respect that the CTS fails. As argued by critics of the scale, the CTS also fails to take into account the meaning, context, and consequences of violence thus overestimating the comparability of female and male victimization. Participants who indicated they had experienced one of the violent tactics from the CTS, were asked to provide details concerning the meaning, context, and consequences of the act. It was hypothesized that males and females would differ in their perceptions of their victimization. Participants were asked to provide details of violence they had perpetrated, but there were no sex differences in their responses to the supplementary questions. There may be a few explanations why no significant sex differences were found. First, very few males indicated that they perpetrated any violence, reducing the power of the statistical procedures. Also, only 75% of males who did report perpetrating a violent tactic provided further details; whereas 91% of females who reported being a perpetrator described what happened. Second, for the categorical variables, participants could only choose one category per question. For example, it may be the case that they chose the first category, "frustration/anger", (the most overrepresented category for motives, see Table 15) with the intention of choosing others. Third, in some cases, the questions asked the respondents to report their partners' actions or reactions to the violence (e.g., "What did your partner do after this incident?", "What were your partner's injuries?",

"How much emotional harm did you inflict on your partner?"). It may be the case that it was difficult for them to perceive the effect their actions may have had on their partner.

For the present study, the interest lies in differences between males and females in the subjective interpretation, context, and consequences of their victimization of the violent tactics from the CTS.

Subjective Interpretation

Participants were asked to indicate to what extent they saw themselves as the victim and the aggressor, and to what extent they attributed blame to themselves and their partner. Responses to these questions reflect how the situation and the victim's role is perceived. In this regard, when considering overall victimization, there were no significant sex differences in seeing oneself as the victim or the aggressor. However, when considering only victims of severe acts of violence, females were more likely than males to see themselves as the victim. There were no sex differences in perceptions of victimization of minor violence but, females were significantly less likely than males to see themselves as the aggressor when their partner threw something at them.

Overall, both females and males were likely to score themselves low on the aggressor scale. However, females consistently scored on the high end of the victim scale; whereas, males rated themselves at, or below the midpoint of the victim scale when they were recipients of violence. Similar to the findings by Makepeace (1986), in situations where one is a victim of violence, females consistently see themselves as the victim and not as the aggressor; whereas, males do not see themselves as the aggressor or the victim.

Female victims of violence were more likely than male victims to blame their partner for any violent episode, whereas both males and females scored low on self-blame. Once again, females scored high on blaming their partner and low on blaming themselves and males scored near the midpoint of the scale for blaming their partner and low on blaming themselves. Females clearly attributed the blame to their partners and not to themselves; whereas, males did not blame their partner or themselves for the violence.

Participants' responses to the questions pertaining to subjective interpretation suggest that female victims of violence appear to clearly see themselves as the victim and their partner as the aggressor in the violent episode. They also clearly attribute blame to their partners and not to themselves for the violence. This fits with the empirical data from feminist theory suggesting males precipitate violence against women. There is confusion as to how males perceive the violence. They do not see themselves as the victim or the aggressor and do not attribute blame to their partner or themselves. It may be the case that males do not want to take responsibility for their role in the violent episode or since many men were unable to give specifics when asked what happened, the incident may have been insignificant or they simply do not recall what occurred. In any case, their experience is not simply a reversal of an aggressive female perpetrator with a powerless male victim.

Context

Critics of the CTS (e.g., Dobash & Dobash, 1977/78; Saunders, 1986) have also argued that the scale does not take into account the context of the violence. They claim

that the scale does not consider who starts the physical violence or that much of the violence perpetrated by women occurs as a result of self-defense. The scale also does not consider that much violence does not occur in the context of an argument, which is an assumption made by Straus (1979).

When asked who they believed started the violence when they were the victims, both males and females were most likely to say that their partner started the physical violence. If this finding is accurate, then respondents should not perceive that their partner hit them out of self-defense or to retaliate or hit back, (this would imply that the participants struck the first blow). Only 1 female indicated she believed her partner was violent in self-defense; whereas 10% of males believed that their partner acted out of self-defense or to retaliate. This is not consistent with reporting that one's partner started the violence. This may suggest that particular incidents are not memorable for male participants and therefore may be insignificant, or that males misrepresent the event to put themselves in a favourable light. It is also possible that starting the argument is equated with starting the physical violence; however, this is unlikely since the question preceding "Who started the physical violence?" was "Who started the argument?"

It was suggested by critics of the CTS, (e.g., Dobash & Dobash, 1977/78; Saunders, 1988), that the scale does not take into account that many females use violence as a form of self-defense. In the present study, no significant sex differences were found in the motives behind the use of violence. Both females and males overwhelmingly reported that they used violence out of frustration and anger. Also, most victims of violence indicated they believed their partner used violence out of frustration or anger. Less than ten percent of males and females indicated that they were violent in self-

defense and approximately 11% of participants believed their partner used violence in self-defense. However, a methodological artifact may have been responsible for this lack of a significant finding. The computer program allowed participants to choose only one category instead of all the categories that may have applied. It is therefore possible that participants chose the first category (frustration/anger) with the intention of choosing other categories as well[5]. If this is the case, the result would be that the category "frustration/anger" is accurately represented, but that all other categories are underrepresented. It is possible that both males and females use violence because they are frustrated and angry, but even with the methodological problem, one third of the female participants indicated that their partner used violence against them to intimidate. This provides some support for the feminist belief that the dynamics of violence differ between the sexes.

Feminist theorists (e.g., Kurz, 1993; Yllo, 1993) argue that males use violence for domination and control. The current study provides some support for this argument in that a large percentage of female victims of violence indicated they believed that their partner used violence to intimidate them. However, the hypothesis that a large proportion of women use violence in self-defense was not supported. Like most males, females indicated that <u>they</u> used violence out of frustration or anger, not out of self-defense. Likewise, both males and females overwhelmingly believed that <u>their partner</u> used violence out of frustration or anger. The lack of support for the self-defense theory may be due to the limitation in the computer program.

Straus (1979) designed the introduction to the CTS so that participants would think of conflicts which occurred in the context of an argument. When asked about the

context in which the incident occurred, one third of the participants indicated that the act did not occur in the context of an argument. Although Straus (1990a) argues that in studies using the CTS, "...the danger of missing violence that was not conflict-related was small", the results of this study demonstrate that a large proportion of violence reported on the CTS does not occur in the context of a disagreement. If participants follow the instructions in the introduction, it is possible that the CTS underestimates violence which is purely an act of malice or is part of a pattern of unprecipitated abuse.

Consequences

Perhaps the single greatest criticism levelled against the CTS is that it fails to take into account the consequences of violence. Studies (e.g., Cantos, Neidig, & O'Leary, 1993; Makepeace, 1986; Stets & Straus, 1990; have demonstrated that women suffer greater physical injury than men as a result of violence. Walker (1979) reported that the psychological aspect of violence is the worst part of violence for women; however, it is unclear how much emotional damage is incurred by male victims of violence.

Participants in the current study were asked about the amount of physical and emotional harm they suffered as a result of their victimization. The greatest differences between the sexes occurred in the amount of emotional harm suffered as a victim of violence. For each individual act from the CTS (and consequently for minor, severe, and overall violence), females indicated that they suffered much more emotional damage than males. Females consistently scored on the high end of the scale; whereas, males consistently scored below the midpoint.

Female victims reported greater physical injury than male victims, but both sexes

scored below the midpoint overall. The sex differences occurred primarily as a result of two minor acts of violence, "pushed, grabbed, or shoved" and "slapped". There were no differences between the sexes on the degree of physical injury as a result of a severe act of violence. In fact, an unexpected finding was that the act which caused the greatest amount of physical injury for males and the second greatest amount of injury for females was "throwing something", (only being "kicked, bit, or hit with a fist" resulted in greater injury). The acts from the CTS are listed in order of severity; therefore, the fact that "throwing something", the first (and supposedly least severe) violence item, produces the greatest degree of harm suggests that there exists a problem in the scoring of the CTS.

The qualitative data were scrutinized for information which could explain why "throwing something" results in greater injury than expected. Three females specified what their partner threw at them: a full shampoo bottle, food, and an ashtray (which missed). Males indicated that they had a pen, book, and a shoe (which missed) thrown at them. Based on the objects thrown, it is difficult to gauge the potential these have for causing physical injury.

However, when participants described the full situation, it appears that having something thrown at oneself is just one act of violence of many which all comprise one incident. In such a case, it may be difficult to determine the damage made by the thrown object when other, more severe acts of violence also take place. This was particularly the case for female respondents. Approximately one third of the females who indicated they were victims of acts from the CTS described experiences of abuse where they could not separate one tactic from others. No males reported similar episodes. To illustrate, the following response is from a female participant who indicated her partner had thrown

something at her:

> I really can't think of what started the incidences [sic] back then. I know he would throw food at me, threaten me with knives, hit me, degrade me and was very decieving [sic].

In other cases, the respondent indicated that he or she had something thrown at them, but when asked for further details, recounted other types of violence. The following excerpt is from a female participant:

> ...told him that I would not tolerant [sic] this kind of behavior and I left [sic] as I was leaving he kicked and shoved me as I was leaving.

The problem with this item and the CTS may be that females' victimization (in particular) cannot be reduced to a series of acts of violence, but rather constitute episodes of violence which include both minor and severe acts of violence. As the above responses and others suggest, the effects of these individual acts cannot easily be isolated from one another.

It may also be the case that since "thrown something" is the first violence item they have the opportunity of responding to, participants may have collapsed all of their experiences into this one item. In many cases, participants wrote comments like "as noted before", "same as previous", "same as told before". This suggests that participants saw the progression of the acts later and tried to separate them out. If they did collapse their experiences into the first item, then this would explain why the damage is inflated for the item "thrown something".

Although the majority of participants did not go to a hospital or a doctor as a result of violence, 11 females and one male indicated that they required medical

attention. It has been suggested that males may be too embarrassed or ashamed to seek medical attention, but the men's responses to the open-ended questions suggest that they did not suffer any physical injuries which would require such attention.

In terms of the consequences of partner violence, males, by their own admission do not appear to suffer to the same extent as females. This provides more support for the hypothesis that male and female victimization cannot be equated.

Summary of Findings

In the present study, the Conflict Tactics Scale was administered in its original form with some elaborations. Fifty-five percent of females reported perpetrating an act of violence toward their partner; whereas 52% of males reported being victimized by either a current or past partner. Thirty-six percent of female participants indicated they had been victims of violence by their partner; whereas 34% of male participants reported perpetrating an act of violence toward their partner. Although the sample was not comprised of couples, roughly symmetrical results would be expected. It appears as though there is some corroboration between males' and females' reports of victimization and perpetration.

However, when given the opportunity to report any other act of violence which was not part of the CTS, and/or to report any sexual assault, the number of female victims of abuse increased. Perusal of the qualitative data as well as details of the last item of the CTS ("anything else") revealed that females appear to be overreporting their own use of violence and underreporting their own victimization. Males do not appear to be underreporting or overreporting their victimization. However, given the increase in

the percentage of women reporting victimization, one would expect many more male perpetrators. Therefore, it can be assumed that men are underreporting their perpetration.

Although the CTS gives the illusion that males' and females' experiences with violence are comparable, the supplementary information provided by participants suggests that their experiences, in fact, differ quite dramatically. The picture of violence one gets from the female victimization data is of a pattern of abuse in which the male partner starts the confrontation, is the aggressor, is responsible for the altercation, and who acts out of frustration, anger, or desire to intimidate. The result of such abuse for women is both severe emotional harm and some physical injury. The data from the male victimization is full of inconsistencies. Males indicate that their female partners overwhelmingly start the violence, but also indicate that a significant proportion use violence out of self-defense or to retaliate. The men in the current study are not clear as to their role in the violence. They could not or would not decipher who was responsible for the violence or who was the victim. There appear to be no damaging consequences for male victims of violence. They report little emotional harm and practically no physical injury.

Both males and females indicated that approximately one third of the violence that they have experienced did not occur in the context of an argument. Since Straus' (1979) introduction to the CTS specifies that participants should think of violence which occurs in the context of an argument, this suggests that the CTS may be flawed in that it may underestimate the number of acts of violence experienced by men and women within intimate heterosexual relationships.

The only conclusion that can be drawn from the results of this study is that

although the Conflict Tactics Scale tries to equate male and female victimization, this is not warranted. It is clear that males and females differ in their interpretation of the violent act, the context of violent episodes, and in the consequences of the violence they experience.

Strengths and Limitations

The current study was designed to be an improvement over previous studies conducted with the Conflict Tactics Scale. Many of the current study's strengths lie in the use of a computer program to administer the measures. The computer program simplified the complex branching in the questionnaires. It would be very difficult to switch between the CTS and the supplementary questions using the traditional paper and pencil questionnaires. In addition, computer administration most likely contributed to higher disclosure rates of experiences with violence. Responding through a computer program probably made the participants feel more comfortable about the confidentiality of their experiences.

This study also provided participants the opportunity to qualify their responses on the CTS through a series of open-ended questions. In fact, one question "Is there anything else that you would like to say about this incident?", allowed participants to add any comments at all regarding the other questions. It is through these type of questions that it was possible to detect patterns of abuse, and not simply acts of violence participants had experienced. Participants, when given the opportunity, frequently disclosed details of episodes of severe violence and abuse which would have been impossible to detect through their responses on the CTS alone.

Two questions, developed by Smith (1987) asking if participants had experienced any sexual abuse or any other abuse not listed in the CTS were included in the present study. Consistent with Smith's findings, responses to these questions revealed that much violence is not captured by the CTS.

As with the strengths of the current study, most of the shortcomings are the result of using a computer program to administer the measures. These shortcomings could not be corrected due to programming difficulties and time constraints.

Some variables (motives, what happened after the incident, what were your injuries) included a category called "other" which participants could chose if the other categories did not represent their answer to the question. Participants who chose that category as their response could not specify what they meant by "other". As a result, valuable information may have been lost.

A problem which occurred with the categorical variables is that participants could only choose one option, where they may have wanted to choose more than one. At least three participants commented that they wished to choose more than one motive behind the use of an item. For example, one could have engaged in violence out of frustration and out of jealousy, or acted in self-defense but also been angry. As a result of this, many categories may be underrepresented.

Future Research

In addition to correcting the above-mentioned limitations, future research could use couples instead of individuals. Comparisons of perceptions between perpetrators and victims were not justifiable because the study did not use couples. Ideally, in order to determine the extent to which males and females agree on what transpired between them,

(including their perceptions of the event, the context of the violence, and the consequences of their actions), couples would need to be recruited.

Conclusions

The Conflict Tactics Scale should be used with caution. Not only has the current study demonstrated that the number of female victims is underestimated by the scale, but it was also demonstrated that male and female victimization are not comparable. Most males who indicated that they were victims of one of the tactics either could not provide details of what happened or they described a single episode of violence with few lasting effects. Many female victims of violence described horrific episodes of abuse which were comprised of more than one item from the CTS and had dramatic effects on their lives. For these women, the CTS, by reducing violence to individual acts, does not do justice to their experiences with violence. The Conflict Tactics Scale simply does not accurately reflect males' and females' experiences with violence.

ENDNOTES

[1]In both studies (Gelles & Straus, 1988; Straus et al., 1980), Straus and his colleagues did not question the respondents regarding their sexual orientation. It was assumed that respondents were involved in heterosexual relationships.

[2]I wish to thank Mr. Don Snider of Instructional Development at the University of Windsor for developing the computer program used in this study.

[3]There was a significant difference between participants with a current partner and those without in the number of experiences with violence. This was the case because participants with a current partner who did not report violence in their current relationship were given the opportunity to disclose any violence which occurred in a past relationship. This increases the likelihood of participants with a current partner to have experienced violence. However, there were no significant differences between participants with a current partner who experienced violence in a current relationship and participants without a current partner who experienced violence in a past relationship.

[4]Three female participants indicated that the survey was too lengthy and stopped after completing the perpetrator version of the CTS. Since counterbalancing between receiving the perpetrator and victimization versions of the CTS was not possible, every participant received the perpetrator version first. It may be the case that victimization is underestimated.

[5]There were at least three participants who indicated to the experimenter that they wished to choose more than one category.

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APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Are you _____?
   1) male
   2) female

2. What is your age?

3. Are you currently involved in a heterosexual intimate relationship (e.g., "dating", "going out", "seeing", "married", or "cohabiting")?
   1) no
   2) yes

   >if 1 then 3a
   >if 2 then 4

3a. Have you ever been involved in a heterosexual relationship?
   1) no
   2) yes

   <if 2 then 5

4. How long have you been involved with your current partner?
   (in months)

5. Are you living with your partner?
   1) no
   2) yes

   >if 2 then 5a

5a. How long have you been living with your partner?
   (in months)

6. What is your racial background?
   1) White
   2) Black
   3) Hispanic
   4) Asian
   5) Native America
   6) Other

APPENDIX B

THE CONFLICT TACTICS SCALE

No matter how well a couple gets along, there are times when they disagree on a major decision, get annoyed about something the other person does, or just have spats or fights because they're in bad mood or tired or for some other reason. They also use many ways of trying to settle their differences. I would like to know more about some things that you and your partner might have done when you had a dispute. Please think back over the last year (or Please think back over your relationship, or Please think back over all of your relationships). First, I'd like you to think of some of the things you may have (ever) done over the last year.

In the past year, how often have you[1] (or Have you ever[2])...

a. Discussed the issue calmly
b. Got information to back up (your / his/her) side of things
c. Brought in or tried to bring in someone to help settle things
d. Insulted or swore at the other one
e. Sulked and/or refused to talk about it
f. Stomped out of the room or house (or yard)
g. Cried
h. Did or said something to spite the other one
i. Threatened to hit or throw something at the other one
j. Threw or smashed or hit or kicked something

k. Threw something at the other one
l. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved the other one
m. Slapped the other one
n. Kicked, bit, or hit with a fist
o. Hit or tried to hit with something
p. Beat up the other one
q. Threatened with a knife or gun
r. Used a knife or gun
s. Anything else which was not previously mentioned

Now I'd like you to think about your partner. In the past year, how often did your partner (or Has your partner ever)..(ITEM)?

---

[1]Respondents will be asked the frequency of each act over the last year where 0 = never; 1 = once; 2 = twice; 3 = 3-5 times; 4 = 6-10 times; 5 = 11-20 times; 6 = more than twenty times.

[2]Respondents who are asked if the acts have ever occurred will simply respond either 0 (no) or 1 (yes).

APPENDIX C

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS FOR PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE

1. Please tell me how it started and what happened?

2. Did the incident occur in the context of an argument?
   1) no
   2) yes

   > if 1 then goto 5

3. How did the argument start?

4. Who started the argument?
   1) self
   2) partner
   3) both
   4) don't know

5. Who started the physical violence?
   1) self
   2) partner
   3) both
   4) don't know

6. Why did you engage in the particular act?
   1) out of frustration/anger
   2) in self-defense
   3) to retaliate/hit back
   4) felt threatened by partner
   5) to harm
   6) to intimidate
   7) to "get something"
   8) jealousy
   9) other

7. To what extent do you see yourself as the aggressor in this situation?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all			somewhat			completely

8. To what extent do you see yourself as the victim?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all			somewhat			completely

9. To what extent do you blame your partner for this incident?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all			somewhat			completely

10. To what extent do you blame yourself for this incident?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all			somewhat			completely

11. What happened after you engaged in the particular act?

12. What did you do after you engaged in the particular act?

13. What did your partner do?
    1) cried
    2) yelled or cursed at you
    3) hit back/threw something at you
    4) ran out
    5) called a friend or relative
    6) other

14. How much physical harm did you inflict on your partner by engaging in the particular act?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
none at all			some			a great deal

>if 1 then goto 15

14a. Did your partner go to the hospital or see a doctor as a result of this incident?
    0) no
    1) yes

14b. Did your partner call the police as a result of this incident?
    0) no
    1) yes

14c. What were his/her injuries?
    0) none
    1) bruises
    2) cuts/scratches/burns
    3) fractures
    4) broken bones
    5) internal injuries
    6) other

15. How much emotional harm did you inflict on your partner by engaging in the particular act?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
none at all			some			a great deal

16. How has this experience affected you?

17. How has this experience affected your partner?

18. Is there anything else you would like to say about this particular incident?

APPENDIX D

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

1. Please tell me how it started and what happened?

2. Did the incident occur in the context of an argument?
   1) no
   2) yes

   >if 1 then goto 5

3. How did the argument start?

4. Who started the argument?
   1) self
   2) partner
   3) both
   4) don't know

5. Who started the physical violence?
   1) self
   2) partner
   3) both
   4) don't know

6. Why do you think your partner engaged in the particular act?
   1) out of frustration/anger
   2) in self-defense
   3) to retaliate/hit back
   4) felt threatened by you
   5) to harm
   6) to intimidate
   7) to "get something"
   8) jealousy
   9) other

7. To what extent do you see yourself as the aggressor in this situation?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   not at all somewhat completely

8. To what extent do you see yourself as the victim?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   not at all somewhat completely

9. To what extent do you blame your partner for this incident?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   not at all somewhat completely

10. To what extent do you blame yourself for this incident?

    1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    not at all somewhat completely

11. What happened after your partner engaged in the particular act?

12. What did you do after your partner engaged in the particular act?
    1) cried
    2) yelled or cursed at him/her
    3) hit back/threw something at him/her
    4) ran out
    5) called a friend or relative
    6) other

13. What did your partner do?

14. How much physical harm did your partner inflict on you by engaging in the particular act?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
none at all			some			a great deal

    >if 1 then goto 15

14a. Did you go to the hospital or see a doctor as a result of this incident?
    1) no
    2) yes

14b. Did you call the police as a result of this incident?
    1) no
    2) yes

14c. What were your injuries?
    0) none
    1) bruises
    2) cuts/scratches/burns
    3) fractures
    4) broken bones
    5) internal injuries
    6) other

15. How much emotional harm did your partner inflict on you by engaging in the particular act?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
none at all			some			a great deal

16. How has this experience affected you?

17. How has this experience affected your partner?

18. Is there anything else you would like to say about this particular incident?

--

APPENDIX E

INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

INFORMATION REGARDING PARTICIPATION AND CONSENT FORM

Research Conducted By: Renee Cormier
Charlene Senn
Department of Psychology
University of Windsor

This study is being conducted in order to examine how heterosexual couples relate to each other when they have conflicts. Your responses will be recorded through a computer program. You will be asked to sit at a terminal and follow the instructions on the monitor. The results of this study will be used in a Master of Arts Thesis in Psychology for the University of Windsor.

Your responses in this study are strictly confidential and you cannot be identified in any way from your responses. Your responses will only be seen by the principal researcher and the research advisor. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can refuse to answer any question at any point during the study. Also, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete, requiring your participation on only one occasion. You will be awarded a bonus point for participating.

If you wish to see a copy of the final report, a copy will be available at the office of the Secretary to the Department Head in the Department of Psychology by September, 1995.

This survey has been cleared by the ethical review committee of the Department of Psychology. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact any of the persons listed below.

Please refer to the list of local services (on-campus and off-campus) attached if this survey has made you uncomfortable in any way.

Renee Cormier (Principal Researcher)	253-4232, ext. 2216 (leave message)
Dr. Charlene Senn (Research Advisor)	253-4232, ext. 2256
Dr. R. Engelhart (Psychology Ethics Committee Chair)	253-4232, ext. 2222

Please retain the top portion of this form for your records. Thank you for your participation.

I, _____(please print your full name), understand this information and voluntarily consent to participate in this study.

_____ _____

signature date

APPENDIX F

DEBRIEFING

Dear Participant,

I would like to thank you for taking part in this study. Your honesty is appreciated. I would like to stress that all of your responses are completely confidential; only myself and my research advisor will see your responses.

Conflict is an inevitable part of any intimate relationship. People resolve conflicts in different ways. Some people use reasoning, others are verbally aggressive while still others use violence. The focus of this study is on understanding why and how violence is used by intimate partners.

Previous research has shown that a large number of males and females are both victims and perpetrators of violence. Some of the questions which still remain are, 'What happens before, during, and after a violent episode?', 'Why do people engage in violence?', and 'How is a violent act interpreted by the victim and the person who was violent?'. The purpose of this study is to answer these questions. The information you have given will help us better understand violence in intimate relationships. Specifically your answers will provide information about the context, meaning, and consequences of violence.

If your participation in this study has upset you in any way, please feel free to talk to me after the session, or call me, my research advisor, Dr. Charlene Senn, or Dr. Roland Engelhart, the Chair of the Psychology Ethics Committee. The numbers are included in the information sheet I gave you earlier. I have also attached a list of names and phone numbers of support services which you may contact if you have any concerns or feelings raised as a result of your participation in this study or for any other reason.

Thank you sincerely,

Renee Cormier

VITA AUCTORIS

Renee A. Cormier was born June 28, 1971 in Saint-Claude, Manitoba. She graduated from Le Complexe Scholaire de Saint-Claude in 1989 and from the University of Manitoba with her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology in 1993. Since 1993, she has been enroled in the Doctoral Programme in Applied Social Psychology at the University of Windsor.